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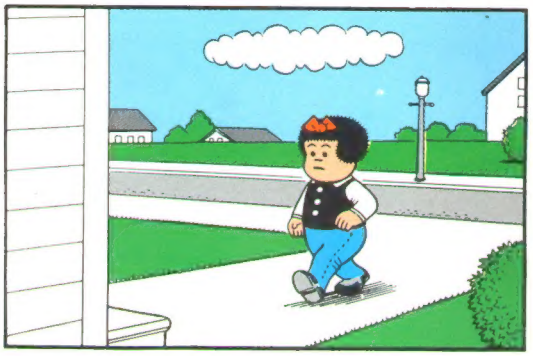
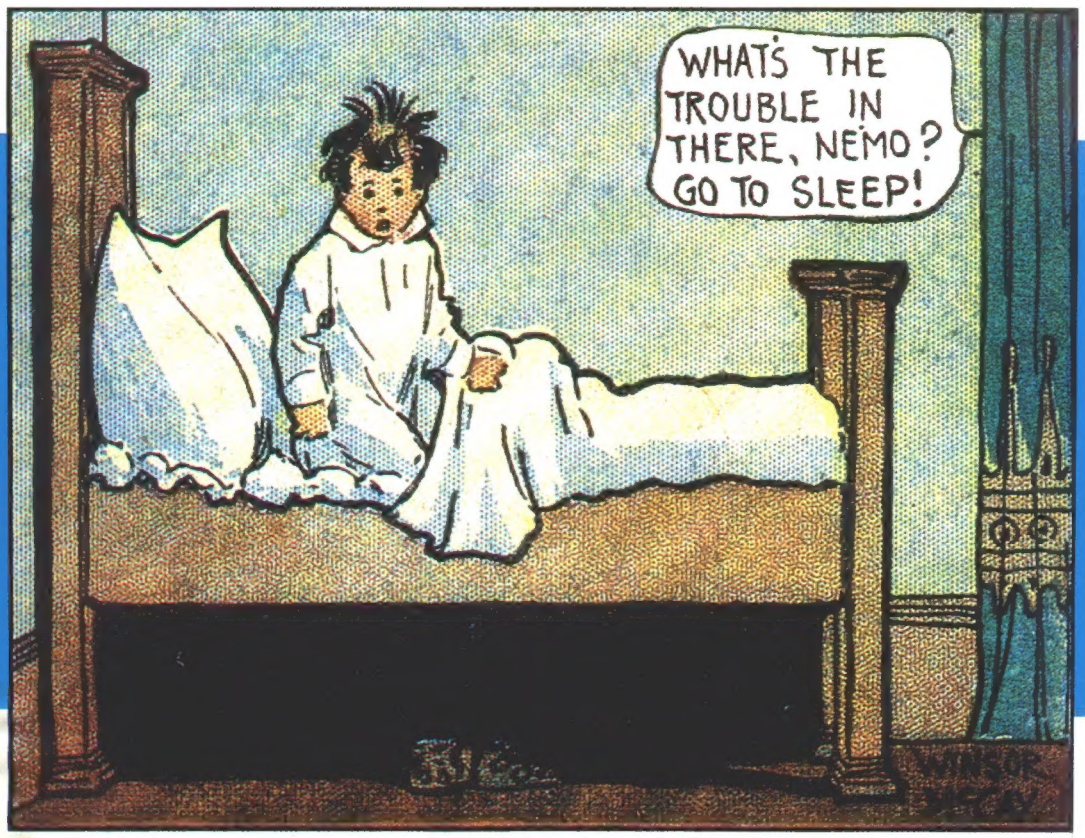


Through the Years With Nancy

LITTLE NEMO



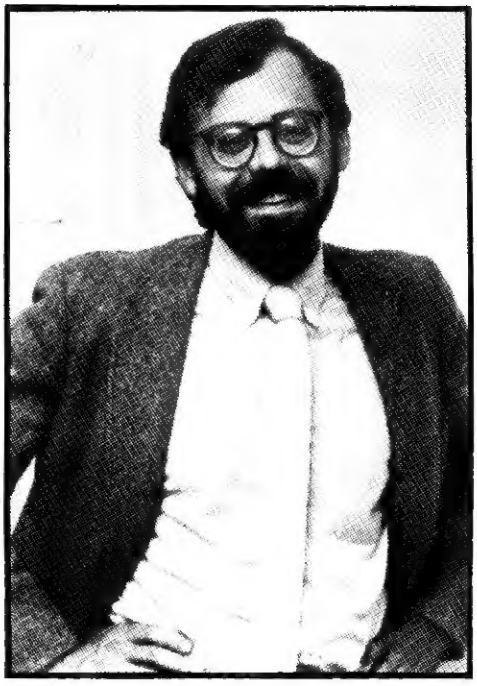
AWAKENING in SLUMBERLAND

THE TECHNIQUES AND BRILLIANCE OF WINSOR McCAY'S MASTERPIECE

Also: Joseph Keppler's Greatest Cartoons; Play It Again, Sam's Strip

EDITORIAL

Chronicler of the Chromos



Richard Samuel West

There's a new name on the **NEMO** masthead this issue, and the Editorial We is very proud to have it there. We'd like to tell you something about Richard Samuel West.

Almost 10 years ago *The World Encyclopedia of Cartoons* was published, and I had written approximately 270 of its entries. As a companion to *The World Encyclopedia of Comics*, this work was to chronicle activities in the fields of political cartoons, magazine gags, newspaper panels, sports cartoons and animation. My fields were newspaper panels and magazine gags and sports cartoons, shared with other writers; and—almost exclusively my assignments—political cartoons and the old humor magazine artists, principally from *Puck*, *Judge*, and *Life*, from *Harper's Weekly*, from Currier and Ives, etc.

When I say "exclusively" I mean that I was given solo tasks on political cartoonists, not such an obscure bunch of fellows; others could have done the research and writing, but these fields were my bailiwick. I was grateful and proud for the assignment. However, exclusivity seemed to be mine on the older magazine and political artists because it seemed at the time that very few others in the historical field had the resources, research, or—quite frankly—the lunatic obsessions that I did for those forgotten masters. So it seemed to the editor, Maurice Horn, the publishers, and myself, and we proceeded. With many of the cartoonists I had done my own research for my own reasons (chiefly love and curiosity) many years beforehand. I wound up reasonably proud with my work for the book, if for no other reason than being a part of lifting the veil that had come to obscure so many forgotten masters.

But I learned that the "exclusive" label was inappropriate. After the book was published I received a letter from one Richard Samuel West, with some nice compliments on my work, offering corrections on a few points, and sharing some details he had dug up on his own. None of this was of the nature of, say, what year Rollin Kirby won his second Pulitzer Prize—a fact that, arcane as it may sound, is routine grist and easily accessible. Rather it was on the level of whether Eugene Zimmerman received part ownership in *Judge* magazine when he left *Puck* in 1885 as I related. Huh?

Meet Our Contributors

As much as I have tried to proselytize, it astounds me when cartoon fans know anything at all of *Puck* and *Judge*, much less Zim himself, much less the details of his financial contracts. Who was this West? A man younger than I, with the same passions for collecting and for research, and the same mission for sharing and celebrating the heritage of the past and discerning whatever is good in the present.

It was a few years before we actually met, and in the meantime he founded and edited two magazines about all phases of political and editorial cartooning, *The Puck Papers* and *Target*. The latter journal, which flourished between 1981 and 1987, was a quarterly bible of the political cartooning field: fiercely independent, oozing integrity, it featured hard-hitting interviews and iconoclastic reviews. And first-rate history. *Target*'s run is like a textbook of thoughtful considerations and definitive treatments in the political cartooning field.

Finally we met, about the time that *Target*'s run was run, and realized we were like brothers separated at birth. We even planned, for a time, to co-edit our own new magazine—about contemporary strips and political cartoons—and we still plan some collaborations as writers, editors and publishers.

Rich was involved in a myriad of other activities through these years. He had edited, for instance, *The Best Political Cartoons of 1978* and *Lost in Space—The Reagan Years* (a Tony Auth collection), as well as many medical books. He was also director of publications for SANE/Freeze, a Washington policy group whose attraction to Rich erased the separated-at-birth possibility in my mind, but nevertheless he was constantly involved with a variety of activities and sure knew his funny pictures. Currently he is researching a biography of William Randolph Hearst's major political-cartooning weapon, Homer Davenport.

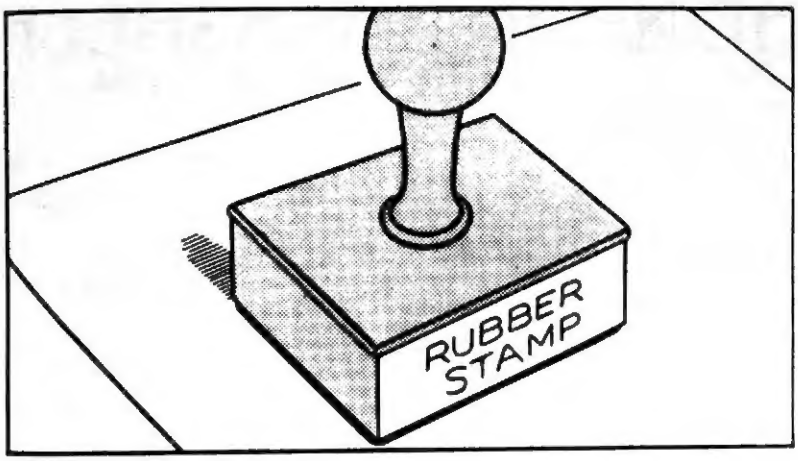
All of which is a long introduction to Richard Samuel West as *NEMO*'s new Contributing Editor, and to his first work for our pages. Rich's current book is a magnificent, 470-page, oversized art book on the life and work of *Puck* founder Joseph Keppler, *Satire on Stone*. Regular *NEMO* readers know of this magazine's interest in the seminal cartoon magazines and their forgotten geniuses; in the past we have focused on historical issues like presidential elections and labor unrest as reflected in its pages, and of artists like Sullivant, Art Young. . . and Zim, with or without his portfolios, whether artistic or financial. Rich West will be continuing that focus as we continue our emphasis on the total picture pinned to the drawing board: cartooning's full heritage, and the vital role played by all of the valued penmen and publications of the past.

In this issue we feature a portion of Joseph Keppler's story, adapted from Rich West's important new book (published, by the way, by University of Illinois Press) with a portfolio of classic cartoons. We hope to have Rich's fingerprints on every issue, most importantly via articles; and upcoming numbers will feature his profiles of cartoonist J.S. Pughe and the latter days of those cartooning pioneers (several of whom became animators as that industry was starting).

Rich West is also a past president of the Society for the Preservation of Political Americana, so we hope also to bring you his thoughts, words and deeds on the world of political cartooning, past, present and future.

Join me in welcoming Richard Samuel West to our pages. I am pleased and proud to have him aboard and to be able to further enrich the offerings that *NEMO* brings you in our devotion to the history and heritage of comics and cartoons.

Richard Samuel West



APRIL, 1989
ISSUE #30
COVER: Winsor McCay

nemo contents

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A not-so-drowsy introduction to one of the comics' greatest creations and the most important reprint event in comics history: *The Complete Little Nemo in Slumberland.* Our portfolio won't be in full color, as will the four-volume book series about to debut, but this issue's cover feature will chart the path to the wonders of Winsor McCay by examining some of his most astonishing pages.

Beating Around the Bushmiller.....30
"I am doing extremely well with my children's strip *Nancy.* It runs in 880 papers and has no social message. Long ago I decided that more people ate cornflakes than caviar. So I slant my gags to the Lawrence Welk gum chewers and it works"—Bushmiller, 1971. Read Brian Walker's profile of early Ernie and decide whether the cartoonist was fooling us or himself. With many illustrations.

Dropping the Puck.....44
Thomas Nast might be more remembered today, but he was eclipsed by a cartoonist who clearly had more influence on American humor, cartooning, and possibly politics and history—Joseph Keppler, founder and color-cartoonist of *Puck* magazine. Adapted from a major new biography of this seminal cartoonist is a look at the most inspired period of his career, with reproductions of his startlingly effective cartoons.

Play It Again, Sam's Strip.....60
Now it's time to look in on the folks at that little house around the corner and down the next block. It's five o'clock and Uncle Fletcher has just polished his prize collection of washrags. He enters the living room as we hear him say . . .

Where Are They Now?.....ahem.
The Herblock interview announced for this issue, and the look at possibly the comics' first daily strip, *Mr. Pee Wee,* will appear in the next regular (i.e., post-*Peanuts*) number of *Nemo.*

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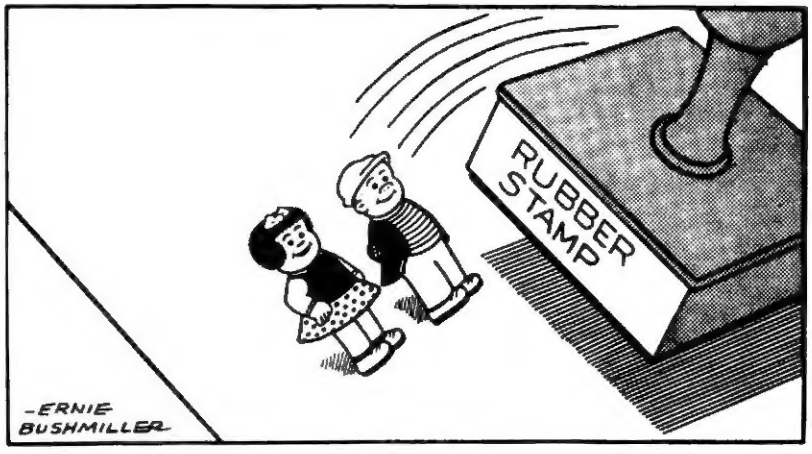

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Although some of the earlier issues of **NEMO: The Classic Comics Library** are sold out, we can still offer the discriminating comics connoisseur a superb collection of most issues of the finest magazine devoted to classic comics:

2 Exclusive material on the birth of *Superman*, including the never-before-seen original Siegel/Shuster fanzine version. Also: *Terry and the Pirates* Concludes. Fred Harman. Art Young.

7 Special Carl Barks issue, with six pages of full-color Barks work! Also, an interview with the Duck Man; rare animation art; Clare Briggs. *Smilin' Jack*, more.

8 *Little Orphan Annie* issue, including a complete reprint of a 1929 tale, an analysis of the series by Donald Phelps, and a biography of Harold Gray. Full-color Annie cover by Gray.

10 Christmas issue, with a portfolio of cartoonists' Christmas cards. Also, Gustave Verbeek's *Upside-Downs*, Mell (*Miss Peach*) Lazarus interviewed, Ray Ewer, and *Mutt and Jeff*.

11 Sam's Strip, by Walker and Browne, premieres; "Dwig's" cartoons; giant Charles Dana Gibson portfolio; James Montgomery Flagg remembered; and the forgotten antics of *Slim Jim*.

12 The cartoonists who fought World War II; Frank King's most fantstic strip; Jack Williamson and Lee Elias's *Beyond Mars* SF strip; and pen woman Rose O'Neill.

13 Big half-year sequence from Will Gould's classic, violent *Red Barry; Major Hoople;* a look back at TAD; and another installment of *Sam's Strip*.

15 A long sequence from Milton Caniff's *Dickie Dare* reprinted; *Tim Tyler's Luck; Hairbreadth Harry* continues; an extra-long "European Heroes" installment; plus reviews and letters.

16 A retrospective of the comic-strip adaptations of *Huckleberry Finn;* George Herriman's pre-Kat strip, *Baron Bean; Hairbreadth Harry* concludes; the art of Joseph Clement Coll.

18 *Li'l Abner's* Al Capp is featured, with his final interview, a hilarious speech, and the complete 1955 "Bald Iggle" sequence. Also, the graphic art of Winsor McCay, and *Sam's Strip*.

19 A classic episode of *Kerry Drake*, Andriola's detective strip; with *Big Chief Wahoo* in Hollywood; the political art of Frank King; and Penman of the Past Russell Patterson.

20 Gustave Veerbeck's classic *Terrors of the Tiny Tads;* R.B. Fuller's adventurous *Oaky Doaks; Sam's Strip;* letters; and a special pictorial spread on strip promotion art. Cover by Alex Raymond.

21 A big helping of Jack Kent's classic *King Aroo;* a look at Percy Crosby's paintings of slum kids; and a complete '40s episode of Harold Gray's little-known Western series, *Little Joe*.

22 A special collection of features on Jimmy Swinnerton, including a portfolio of rare work; plus *Joe Palooka*, the cartoons of John Held, Jr., and political cartoonists and the labor disputes.

23 A complete episode of *Little Orphan Annie* from 1937; a look back at *Hi and Lois;* Fontaine Fox's assitant talks about working on *Toonerville Trolley;* and the labor disputes.

24 A special all-Rube Goldberg issue, including a long article on his work, two first-person piece by Rube, a complete checklist, portfolios of *Boob McNutt* Sunday pages and classic "inventions."

25 Edwina interviewed, with an episode of her *Cap Stubbs and Tippie;* Gene Ahern's earliest work; Milton Caniff in adland; and John Wheeler's reminiscences of Bud Fisher, TAD, and others.

26 A generous portfolio of T.S. Sullivant's animals. Cartooning contests recalled; *Henry;* and rare examples of *Everett True*.

27 Norman Rockwell's early (and rare) cartoons and humor-magazine work; the classic Western strip *White Boy;* William Faulkner's cartoons; yesteryear's cartoons about the. . . budget surplus?

28 Ethnicity in the comics, with articles on racial attitudes in the comics, Jews in comics, blacks in comics, and a 22-page ethnic images portfolio. Also: Milt Gross' *Nize Baby*.

29 A *Gasoline Alley* Sunday pages portfolio; a long episode of *Ming Foo*, a classic adventure strip; and an interview with one of the grand old men of comic strips, Ferd Johnson.

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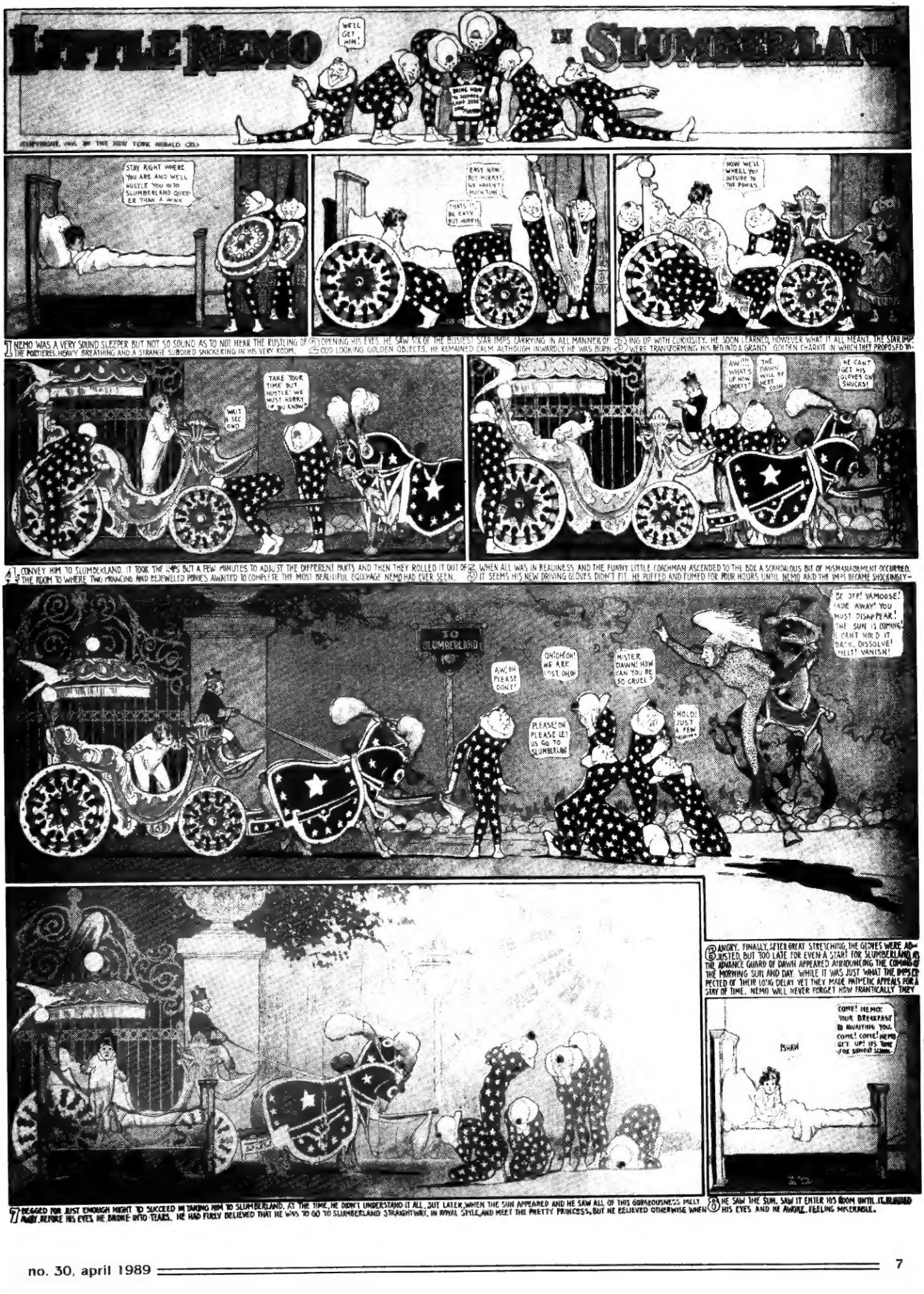
WAKING UP IN SLUMBERLAND

Winsor McCay's *Little Nemo In Slumberland* is possibly the most celebrated strip in comics history. Every comics fan knows about it, and every critic has praised it. Yet very few people have read the entire run of the masterpiece: since its first newspaper run in 1905-1911, it has never been reprinted completely, never in original colors. Seven publishers around the world—including Fantagraphics in the U.S.—are about to remedy that situation. Packaged by Remco Worldservice Books, *The Complete Little Nemo in Slumberland* will present the entire run in four oversized volumes. Following is a portfolio (in black and white, alas), of McCay's most brilliant pages, highlighting McCay's best artwork and discussing his fabulous techniques.

This page is a genuine curiosity and something of a mystery. It was never printed in the *New York Herald*, Winsor McCay's home newspaper, although it did appear in syndication. It also appeared on the front page of the Paris, France edition of the *Herald* (the forerunner of today's *International Herald-Tribune*), and is the frontispiece of the *Complete Little Nemo in Slumberland*. Why it never appeared in the *New York Herald* is unknown, but the page, drawn when McCay's strip was just more than two months old, is a superb capsulization of *Little Nemo*'s theme and premise. Nemo is the passive traveller—not a motivator—of actions in Slumberland; the world he enters is elegant and (progressively) Baroque; and he is, in frustration, interrupted at the threshold of joy. As in many early pages the motifs of Dawn and sun are employed as agents, and McCay was still experimenting—awkwardly—with running captions under his panels.


LITTLE NEMO IN SLUMBERLAND
WE'LL GET HIM!
COPYRIGHT, 1906, BY THE NEW YORK HERALD CO.
STAY RIGHT WHERE YOU ARE AND WE'LL HUSTLE YOU OFF TO SLUMBERLAND QUICKER THAN A WINK
EASY NOW, BUT HURRY! WE HAVEN'T MUCH TIME
THAT'S IT, BE EASY, BUT HURRY!
NOW WE'LL WHEEL YOU OUTSIDE TO THE PONIES.
WAIT A SECOND
TAKE YOUR TIME BUT HUSTLE! WE MUST HURRY, IF YOU KNOW
AW!!! WHAT'S UP NOW, HONEY?
THE DAWN WILL BE HERE SOON
HE CAN'T GET HIS GLOVES ON! SHUCKS!
SLUMBERLAND
AW, OH PLEASE DON'T!
OH! OH! OH! WE ARE LOST, OH, OH!
MISTER DAWN! HOW CAN YOU BE SO CRUEL?
PLEASE, OH PLEASE LET US GO TO SLUMBERLAND
HOLD! JUST A FEW MINUTES
BE OFF! VAMOOSE! FADE AWAY! YOU MUST DISAPPEAR! THE SUN IS COMING! I CAN'T HOLD IT BACK. DISSOLVE! MELT! VANISH!
PSHAW
COME! NEMO! YOUR BREAKFAST IS AWAITING YOU. COME! COME! NEMO GET UP! IT'S TIME FOR SUNDAY SCHOOL.

1) NEMO WAS A VERY SOUND SLEEPER BUT NOT SO SOUND AS TO NOT HEAR THE RUSTLING OF THE PORTIERES, HEAVY BREATHING AND A STRANGE SUBDUED SNICKERING IN HIS VERY ROOM.

2) OPENING HIS EYES, HE SAW SIX OF THE BUSIEST STAR IMPS CARRYING IN ALL MANNER OF ODD LOOKING GOLDEN OBJECTS. HE REMAINED CALM, ALTHOUGH INWARDLY HE WAS BURNING UP WITH CURIOSITY. HE SOON LEARNED, HOWEVER WHAT IT ALL MEANT. THE STAR IMPS WERE TRANSFORMING HIS BED INTO A GRAND GOLDEN CHARIOT IN WHICH THEY PROPOSED TO

3) CONVEY HIM TO SLUMBERLAND. IT TOOK THE IMPS BUT A FEW MINUTES TO ADJUST THE DIFFERENT PARTS AND THEN THEY ROLLED IT OUT OF THE ROOM TO WHERE TWO PRANCING AND BEJEWELED PONIES AWAITED TO COMPLETE THE MOST BEAUTIFUL EQUIPAGE NEMO HAD EVER SEEN.

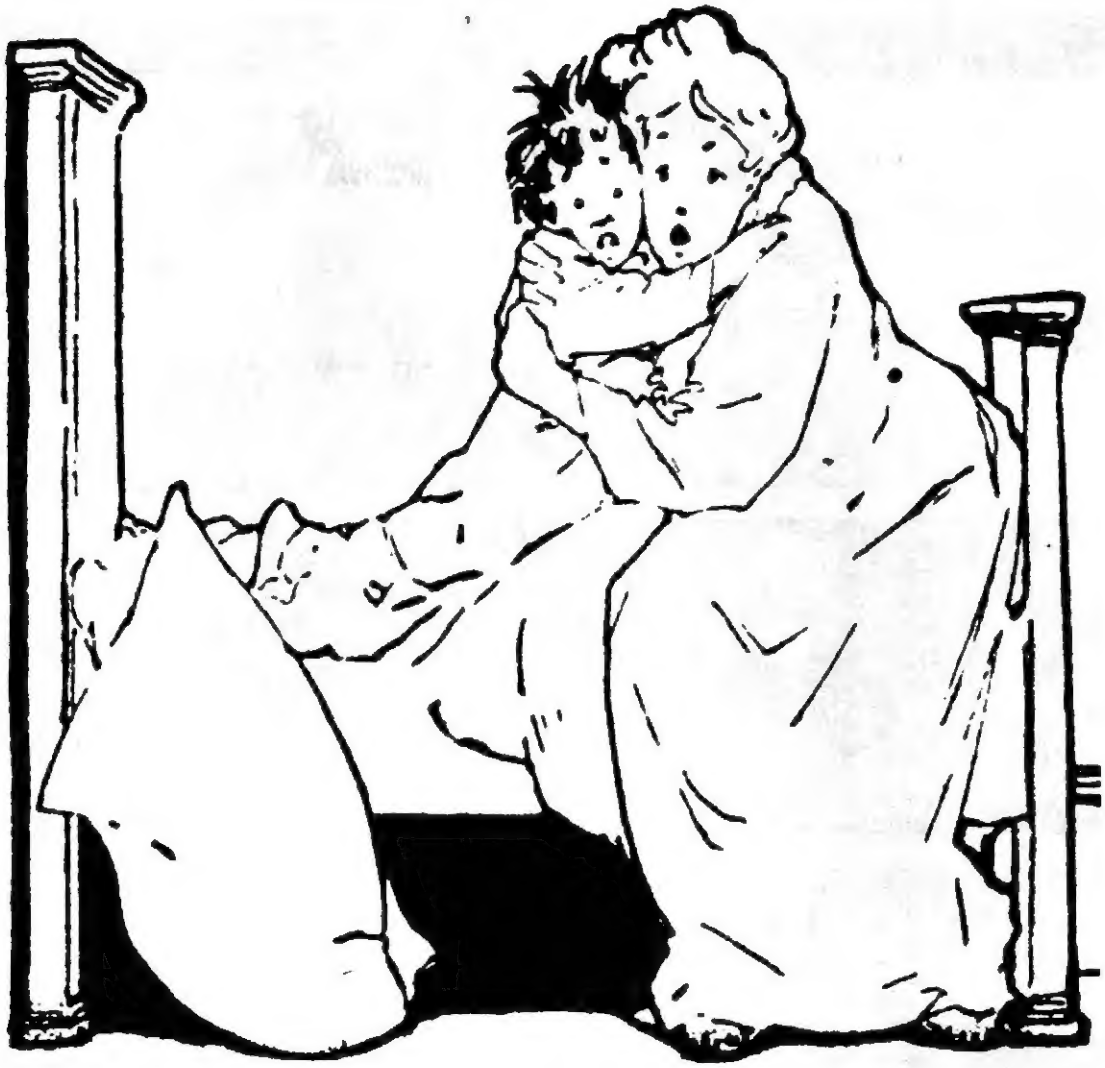
4) WHEN ALL WAS IN READINESS AND THE FUNNY LITTLE COACHMAN ASCENDED TO THE BOX A SCANDALOUS BIT OF MISMANAGEMENT OCCURRED. IT SEEMS HIS NEW DRIVING GLOVES DIDN'T FIT. HE PUFFED AND FUMED FOR FOUR HOURS UNTIL NEMO AND THE IMPS BECAME SHOCKINGLY—

5) ANGRY. FINALLY, AFTER GREAT STRETCHING, THE GLOVES WERE ADJUSTED, BUT TOO LATE FOR EVEN A START FOR SLUMBERLAND AS THE ADVANCE GUARD OF DAWN APPEARED ANNOUNCING THE COMING OF THE MORNING SUN AND DAY. WHILE IT WAS JUST WHAT THE IMPS EXPECTED OF THEIR LONG DELAY YET THEY MADE PATHETIC APPEALS FOR A STAY OF TIME. NEMO WILL NEVER FORGET HOW FRANTICALLY THEY

7) BEGGED FOR JUST ENOUGH MIGHT TO SUCCEED IN TAKING HIM TO SLUMBERLAND. AT THE TIME, HE DIDN'T UNDERSTAND IT ALL, BUT LATER, WHEN THE SUN APPEARED AND HE SAW ALL OF THIS GORGEOUSNESS MELT AWAY BEFORE HIS EYES HE BROKE INTO TEARS. HE HAD FULLY BELIEVED THAT HE WAS TO GO TO SLUMBERLAND STRAIGHTWAY, IN ROYAL STYLE, AND MEET THE PRETTY PRINCESS, BUT HE BELIEVED OTHERWISE WHEN

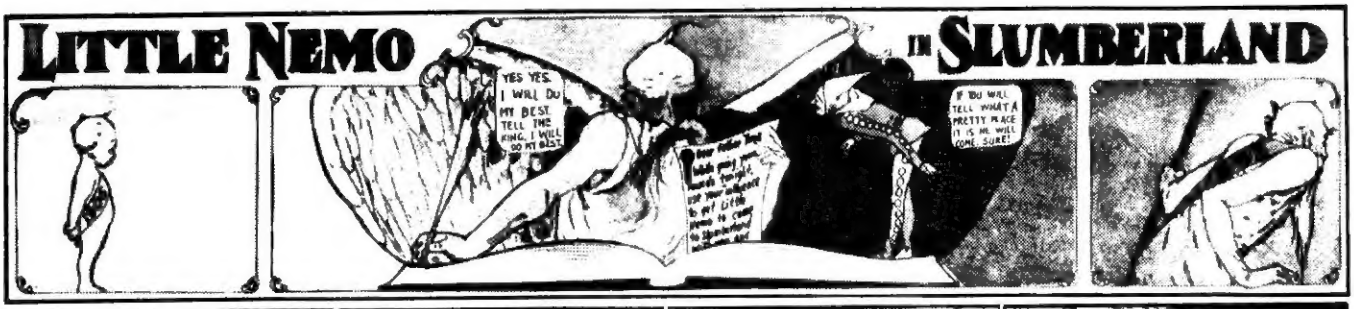
8) HE SAW THE SUN, SAW IT ENTER HIS ROOM UNTIL IT BLURRED HIS EYES AND HE AWOKE, FEELING MISERABLE.

[special case; see text]



This page, the last Sunday from *Little Nemo*'s first year, is audacious in both conception and design. Nemo is taken by Father Time to the Hall of Time, where a visitor may open a door marked by a year, hold the number of his age-to-be in that year, and become that age. In what was becoming apparent as McCay's brand of cruelty to his comic-strip ward, there is a particularly horrific denouement: Nemo is suddenly abandoned at the moment he "turns" 99, and the scene disappears, so Old Nemo is left to wander forever, alone and infirm. Nevertheless the concept—and its unfolding humor and horror—is impressive. No less impressive is the design of the page, which is typical of McCay's unorthodox layouts. Less than a decade after the birth of the comic strip—and while other cartoonists were still experimenting with panel progression and even whether to draw strips vertically or horizontally—McCay employs progressively larger panels as the story develops and as Nemo grows larger; as the tale winds down, and "crunches," the panels constrict.

LITTLE NEMO IN SLUMBERLAND



1 PROMPTLY AT TWELVE O'CLOCK, MIDNIGHT, OLD FATHER TIME CAME IN AND GREETED NEMO WITH "A HAPPY NEW YEAR TO YOU" TIME SUDDEN, UNEXPECTED AND

2 HURRIED VISIT OF THIS QUAINT OLD FELLOW QUITE UPSET NEMO WHO WAS UP AND ASKING QUESTIONS IMMEDIATELY. "WHO, WHY, WHERE AND "HOW" WERE

3 ALL NEMO COULD GASP IN HIS EXCITEMENT, BUT FATHER TIME WAS TOO BUSY TO STOP SO HE GRABBED UP HIS INQUISITOR AND FLEW AWAY INTO THE

JUST TOUCH IT AND YOU ARE NINE YEARS OF AGE. EACH YEAR YOU TOUCH MAKES YOU A YEAR OLDER
OH, HOW IT MAKES ME GROW WHEN I TOUCH IT. IT'S LIKE A SEE UPSIDE DOWN

4 FUTURE. WHERE HE COULD EXPLAIN HOW THE YEARS WERE MADE. WHEN HE HAD ARRIVED AT THE HOME OF FATHER TIME, NEMO FOUND OUT ALL ABOUT HOW

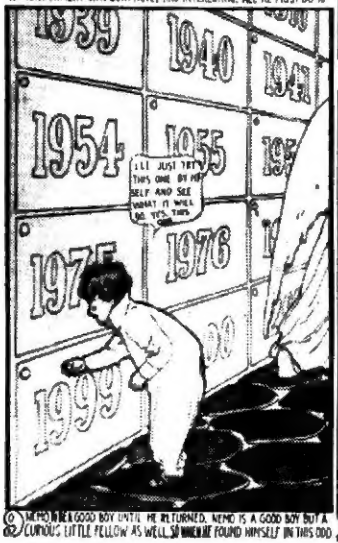
5 THE YEARS ARE NUMBERED AND HOW EACH NUMBER AFFECTED HIM, THE EN TERTAINMENT WAS BOTH NOVEL AND INTERESTING. ALL HE MUST DO TO

6 BECOME A YOUNG MAN OF TWENTY-FIVE TO TOUCH THE YEAR NUMBER OF NINETEEN HUNDRED AND TWENTY FIVE. NEMO WAS, THOROUGHLY

7 DELIGHTED WITH IT ALL UNTIL HE WAS ASKED TO TOUCH THE YEAR NUMBER 1948. WHEN HE BALKED A TRIFLE, BUT WHEN FATHER TIME

NO. I MUST GO NOW, INTO SLUMBERLAND FOR A MINUTE. YOU MAY PLAY AROUND BUT BE CAREFUL
OH! HOW FUNNY! I FEEL SO SMALL! THATS SPLENDID! TRY IT AGAIN!

8 BROUGHT HIM BACK TO HIMSELF AGAIN HE WAS QUITE RECONCILED TO HIS LOT AND WHEN THEN EXPLAINED THAT HE MUST STEP OUT A MINUTE AND CAUTIONED



9 NEMO TO BE A GOOD BOY UNTIL HE RETURNED. NEMO IS A GOOD BOY BUT A CURIOUS LITTLE FELLOW AS WELL. SO WHEN HE FOUND HIMSELF IN THIS ODD

10 PLACE ALONE HE DID JUST AS WE MIGHT HAVE, BUT PROBABLY CURTBED HIS CURIOSITY. HIS KNOWLEDGE OF ARITHMETIC BEING LIMITED,

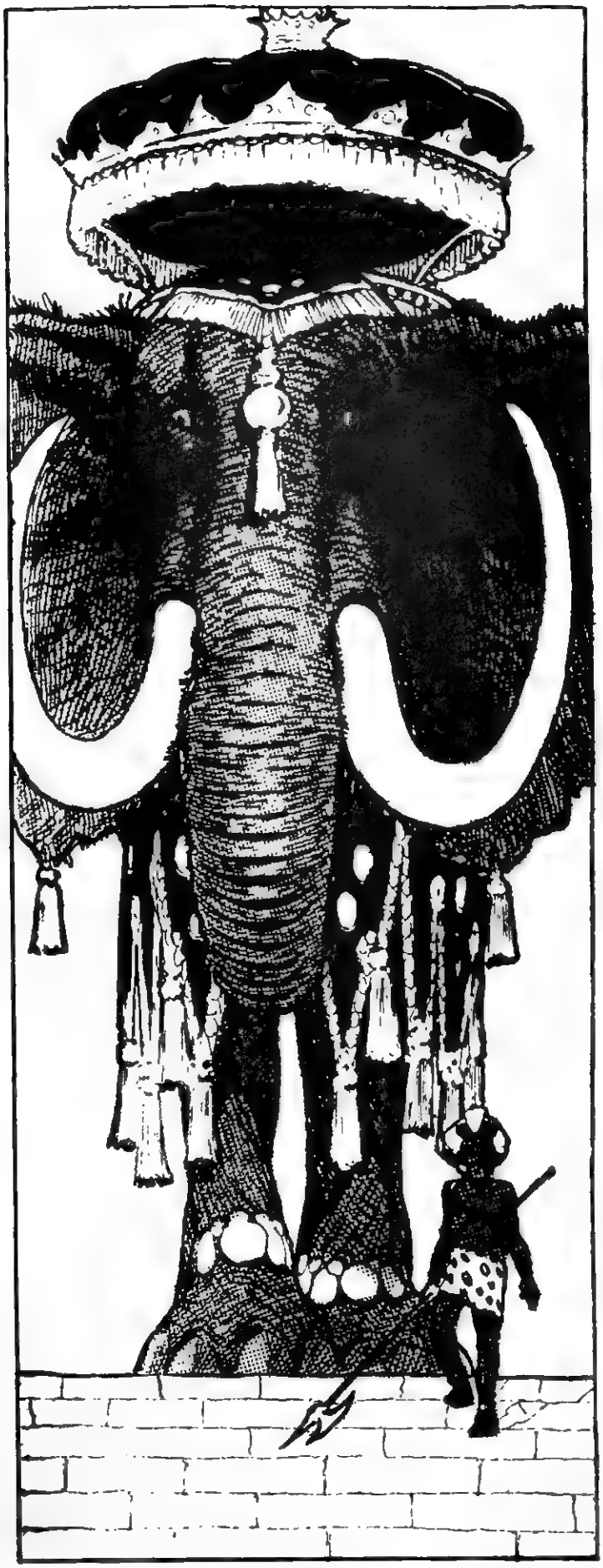
11 WE SURMISE, IS WHAT CAUSED HIS UNDOING. PRINCIPALLY, AT ANY RATE HE WAS UNDONE COMPLETELY. HIS EFFORTS TO SCREAM LOUDLY, WITH A

12 FEEBLE VOICE, WERE PITIABLE, BUT HIS MAMMA HEARD HIM AND, SO SHE SAID, MOST OF THE NEIGHBORHOOD ALSO.

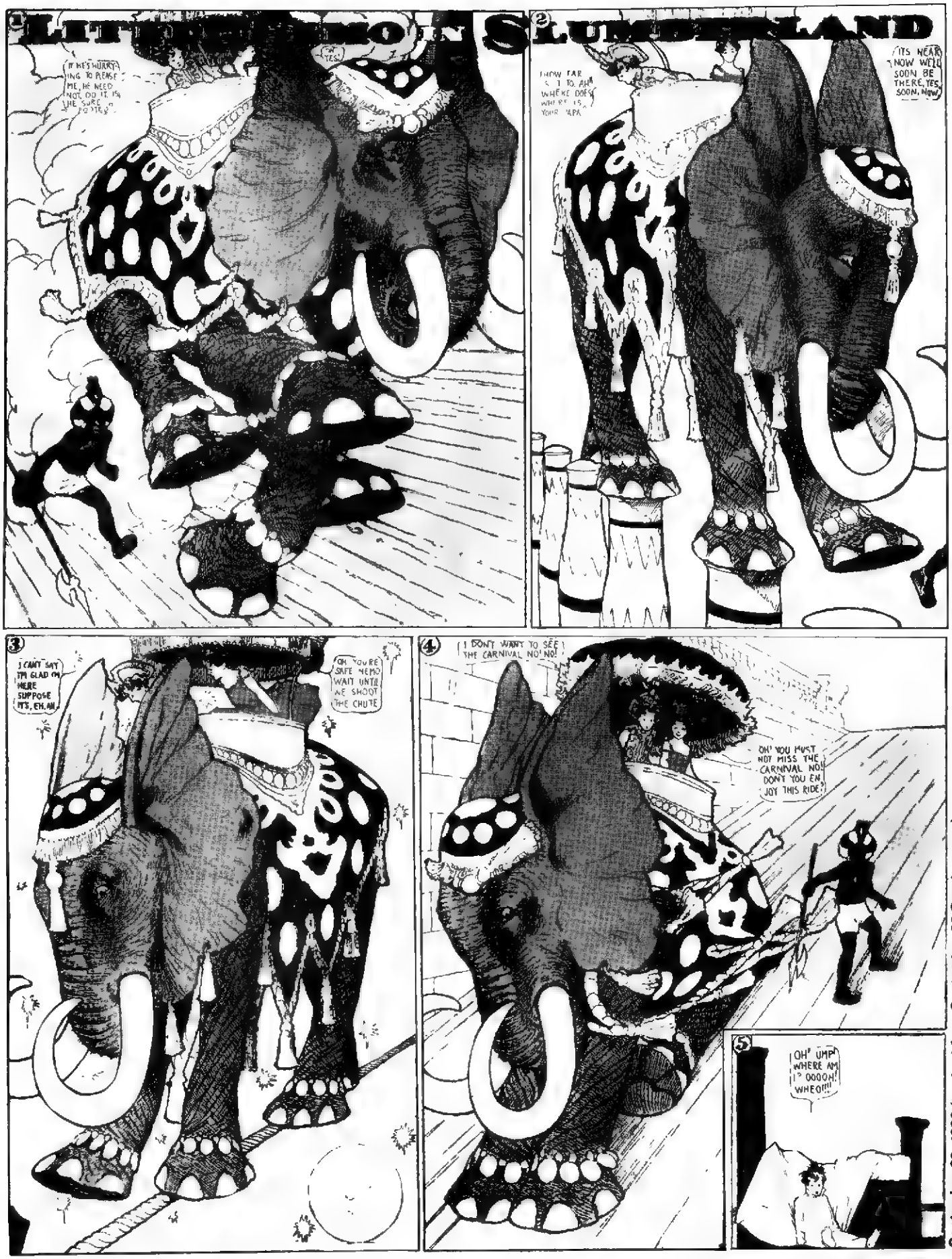
December 31, 1905

This page is distinctive for its ordinariness and its exceptional qualities. Its layout is rather standard, with straightforward panel arrangement and none of the changing shapes and dynamic architectonics that marked most of his *Nemo* pages (yet its symmetry, like that of George Herriman's *Krazy Kat* Sundays, is quietly brilliant, powerful, and contextually appropriate at all times). The page is also notable for its showcasing of Little Nemo himself. As a giant he is delineated in detail, but almost always McCay had drawn him as a diminutive figure, almost inconspicuous in the dreamland he visited. Similarly Nemo displays more of a "voice" in this page than he is usually permitted to do; indeed he is the most personality-devoided character in the comics. In Latin "Nemo" means "no one."

LITTLE NEMO
SLUMBER LAND
PSHAW THAT'S MEAN!
YOUR MAJESTY! LITTLE NEMO SIMPLY CAN NOT GET USED TO SLUMBERLAND. HE AWOKE TONIGHT JUST AS HE APPROACHED THE FOURTH GATE. WE HOPE TO MAKE GREAT PROGRESS WITH HIM FROM NOW ON. HOWEVER, SORROWFULLY YOURS!
1
NOW, NEMO, YOU WILL SOON BE READY TO START FOR THE FOURTH GATE. AREN'T YOU HAPPY?
YES BUT WHY MUST I BE TURNED INTO A GIANT. HAVE I GOT TO FIGHT A BATTLE WITH SOME ONE TO GET IN?
2
NO. THE FOURTH GATE IS GUARDED BY BIG GIANTS. BRAINLESS FELLOWS WHO MUST BE APPROACHED VERY CAUTIOUSLY
3
WELL, GOOD-BYE! YOU HAVE DONE SPLENDIDLY GOOD BYE! TO YOU ALL!
SUCCESS TO YOU
BEST WISHES NEMO!
TA TA! NEMO! TA TA!
4
THEN I DON'T HAVE TO FIGHT DO I? ARE THESE GIANTS CROSS? MEAN, I MEAN
NO. IF THEY SEE YOU ARE A GIANT THEY WILL BE MORE APT TO BE VERY KIND. ARE YOU AFRAID?
5
NO. I'M NOT AFRAID. I FEEL LIKE I COULD LICK A HUNDRED GIANTS NOW! I'M NOT AFRAID OF ANY BODY
THAT'S JUST WHY YOU HAVE BEEN CHANGED INTO A GIANT, SO YOU WILL BE BRAVE
6
WHEN WE PASS THROUGH THIS FOREST WE SHALL COME TO THE LANDS END AND THE FOURTH GATE. NOW, DON'T WAKE UP
7
GUARDS OF THE FOURTH GATE! IN THE NAME OF HER MOST GRACIOUS MAJESTY THE PRINCESS OF SLUMBERLAND, I COMMAND YOU TO ARISE! AND ALLOW TO PASS, HER NEW PLAYMATE LITTLE NEMO
LITTLE NEMO HE LOOKS QUITE HUSKY TO ME
YOU MEAN BIG NEMO, DON'T YOU?
8
QUIT PROWLING AROUND IN THERE, NEMO YOU HEAR? AND GO TO SLEEP
May 27, 1906

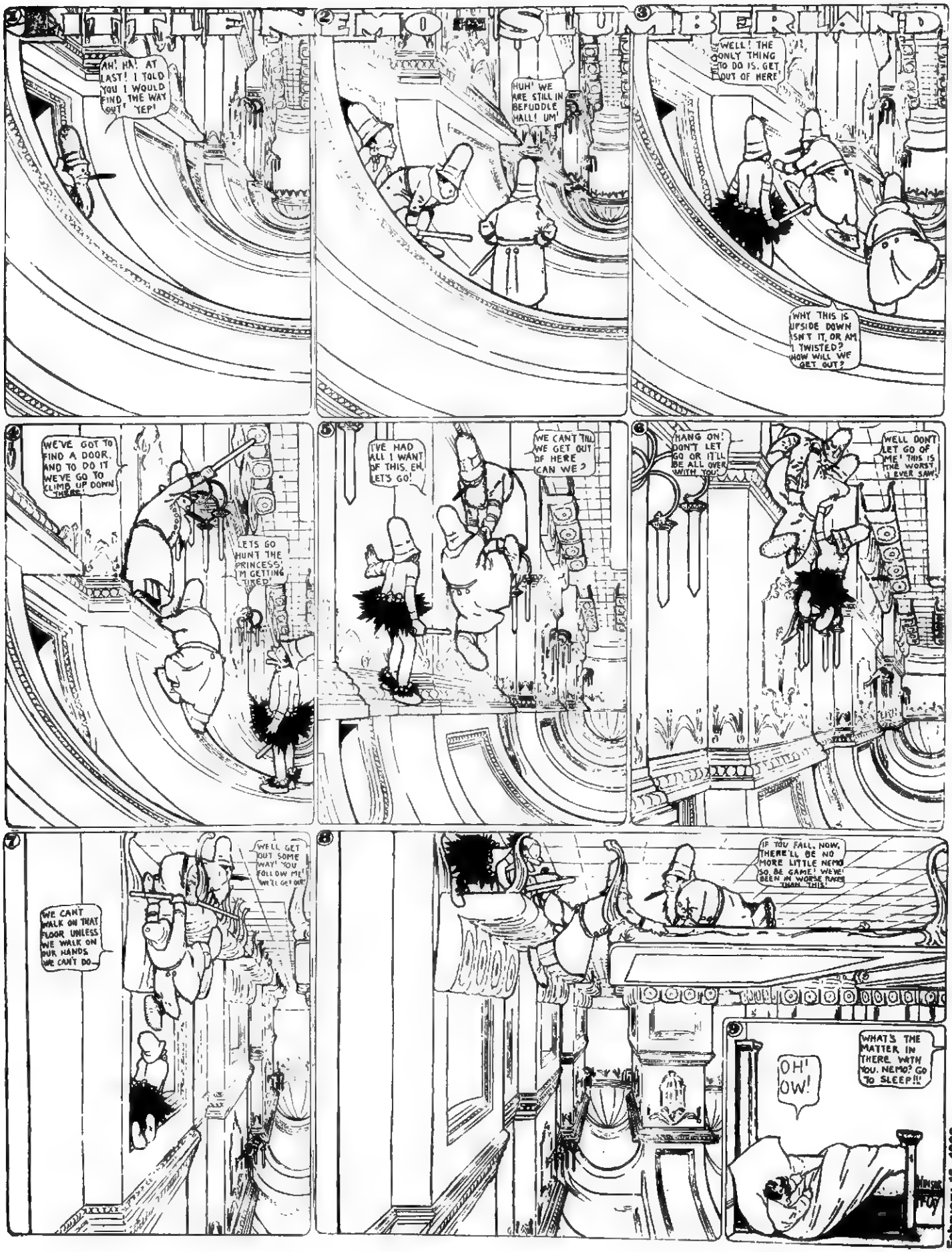


Another audacious page layout by McCay. In our day, when we are accustomed to seeing three or four or more Sunday comics crammed on a newspaper page, we might find it hard to imagine not only one strip per page, but only four large panels. Yet when the occasion demanded—such as depicting an oversized elephant cavorting through space—a colorful, larger-than-life page that hits readers head-on was perfect for McCay's purpose. And only the week before the cartoonist introduced the elephant via a series of elongated vertical panels that seemed to have the pachyderm charge right into readers' faces.

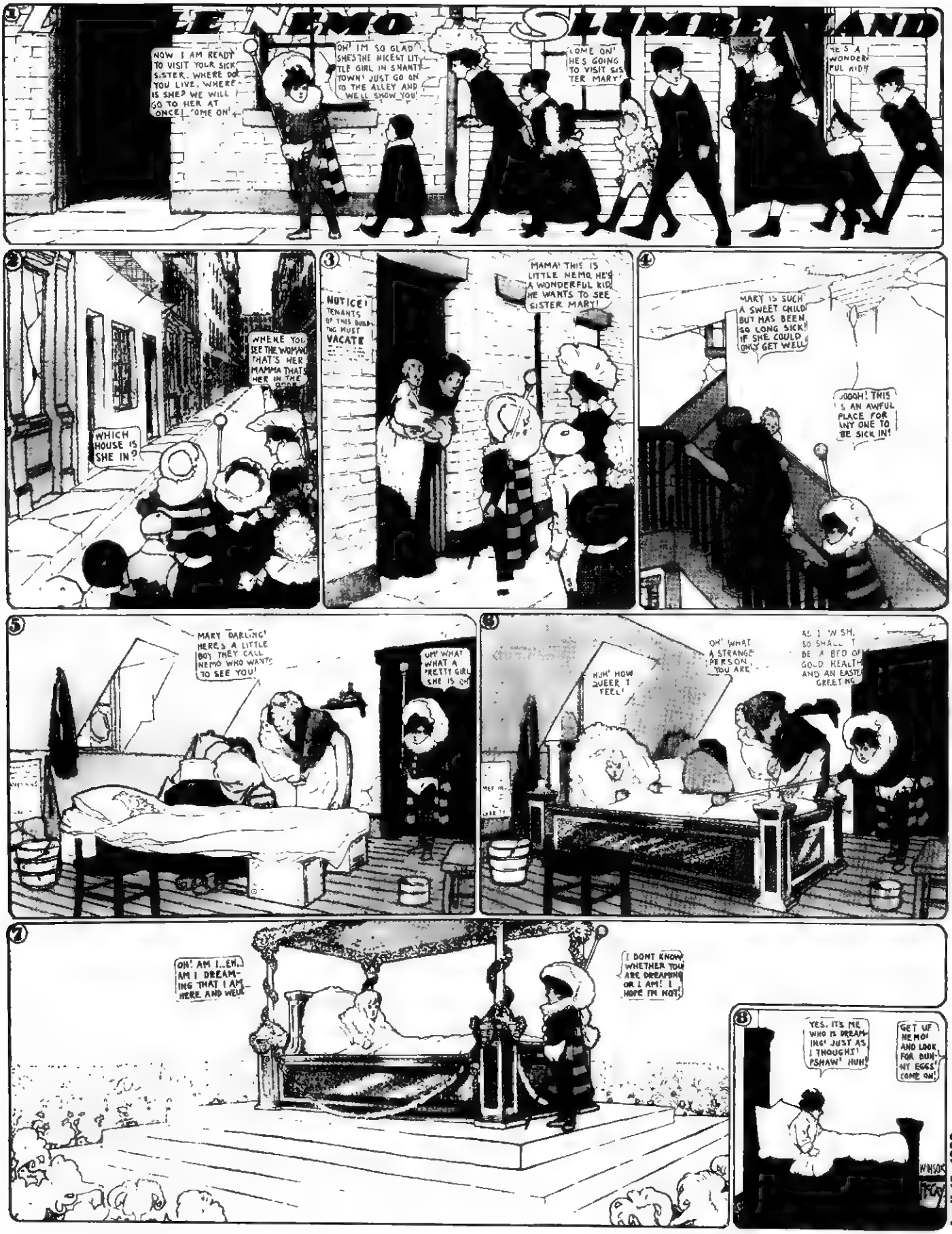

LITTLE NEMO IN SLUMBERLAND
IF HE'S HURRYING TO PLEASE ME, HE NEED NOT, DO IT, I'M SURE TO TEASE
OH YES!
HOW FAR IS IT TO, AH! WHERE DOES WHERE IS, YOUR PAPA
ITS NEAR NOW WE'LL SOON BE THERE, YES SOON, NOW!
I CAN'T SAY I'M GLAD I'M HERE SUPPOSE IT'S, EH, AH
OH YOU'RE SAFE NEMO WAIT UNTIL WE SHOOT THE CHUTE
I DON'T WANT TO SEE THE CARNIVAL NO! NO!
OH! YOU MUST NOT MISS THE CARNIVAL NO! DON'T YOU EN JOY THIS RIDE!
OH! UMP! WHERE AM I? OOOOH! WHEO!!!

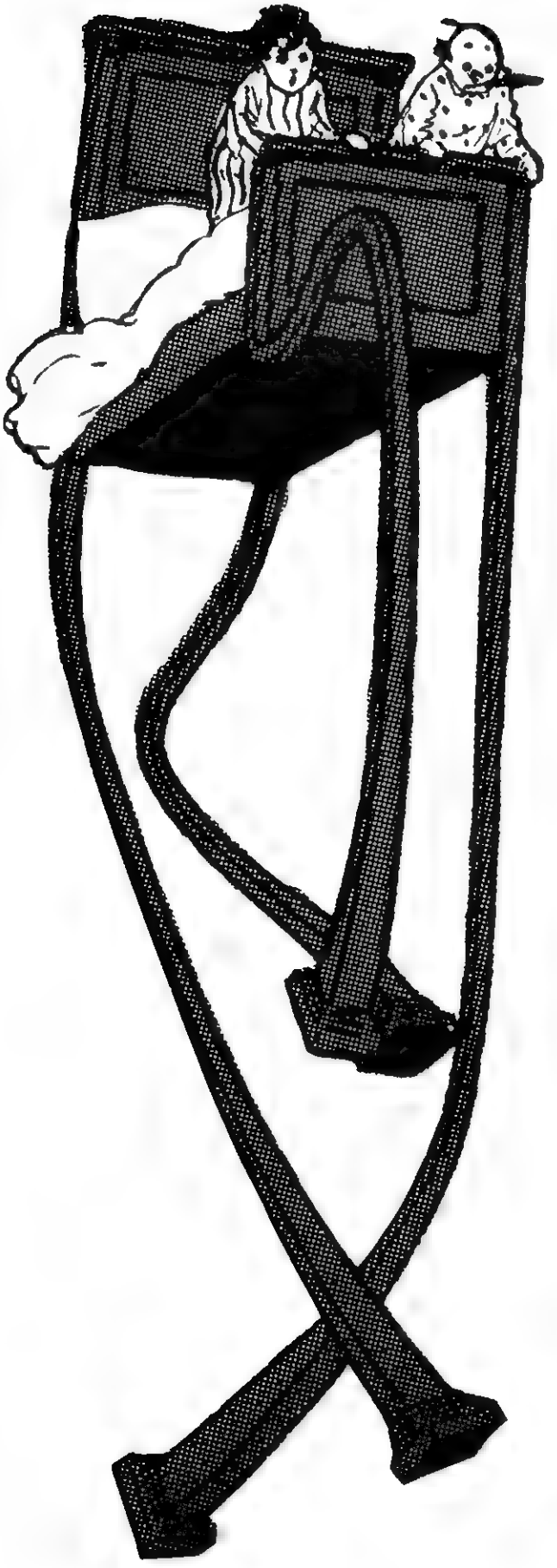
September 30, 1906 (spot art from September 23 Sunday page)

In *Little Nemo* Winsor McCay was playing constantly with perceptions of reality. And if, in the beginning of the strip's run, his in-jokes were on Little Nemo, there was an evolution, one senses, to playing with readers' perceptions even more. In the famous "Befuddle Hall" sequence of 1908, Nemo, Flip, and Impy visit a vast palace where things are not as they seem—even, sometimes, after careful examination. In this famous page the architecture and design seems askew until the "logic" is revealed: everything (including, evidently, the Law of Gravity itself) is turned upside-down.

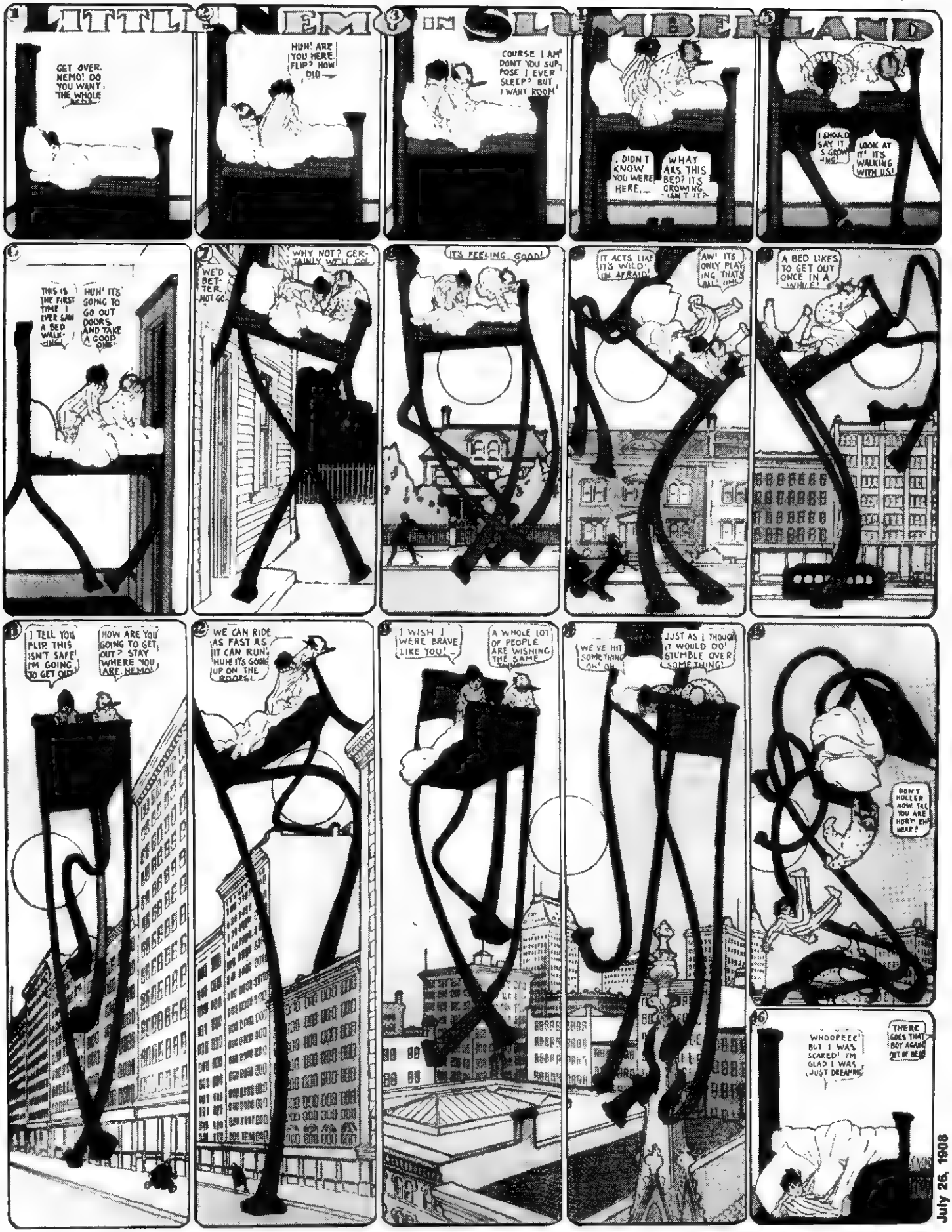

LITTLE NEMO SLUMBERLAND
AH! HA! AT LAST! I TOLD YOU I WOULD FIND THE WAY OUT! YEP!
HUH! WE ARE STILL IN BEFUDDLE HALL! UM!
WELL! THE ONLY THING TO DO IS. GET OUT OF HERE!
WHY THIS IS UPSIDE DOWN ISN'T IT, OR AM I TWISTED? HOW WILL WE GET OUT?
WE'VE GOT TO FIND A DOOR. AND TO DO IT WE'VE GO TO CLIMB UP DOWN THERE.
LETS GO HUNT THE PRINCESS. I'M GETTING TIRED!
I'VE HAD ALL I WANT OF THIS. EH. LET'S GO!
WE CAN'T TELL WE GET OUT OF HERE CAN WE?
HANG ON! DON'T LET GO OR IT'LL BE ALL OVER WITH YOU!
WELL DON'T LET GO OF ME! THIS IS THE WORST I EVER SAW!
WE CAN'T WALK ON THAT FLOOR UNLESS WE WALK ON OUR HANDS WE CAN'T DO.
WELL GET OUT SOME WAY! YOU FOLLOW ME! WE'LL GET OUT
IF YOU FALL NOW, THERE'LL BE NO MORE LITTLE NEMO SO BE GAME! WE'VE BEEN IN WORSE PLACES THAN THIS!
OH! OW!
WHAT'S THE MATTER IN THERE WITH YOU, NEMO? GO TO SLEEP!!!
February 16, 1908

Later in 1908 the second most famous sequence in *Little Nemo* appeared—the Shantytown episode. It was totally unique, not just within the *Nemo* saga, but in strip history as well. It was the one story where Nemo assumed a positive, not passive, personality; it was a sequence wherein the boy Nemo was an agent of dramatic action and not a victim; it was an episode where he was not constantly anguished by frustration and bitter disappointment. Rather, in this impressive story Nemo becomes a Christ-figure. He redeems the Earth by transforming an urban slum into a paradise. And this page—which appeared on Easter Sunday—shows Nemo healing, or perhaps raising from the dead, a sick girl. Whatever allegories or symbolism was at work, McCay was clearly displaying a social conscience that would manifest itself further a few years later in countless editorial cartoons by McCay for the Hearst press.

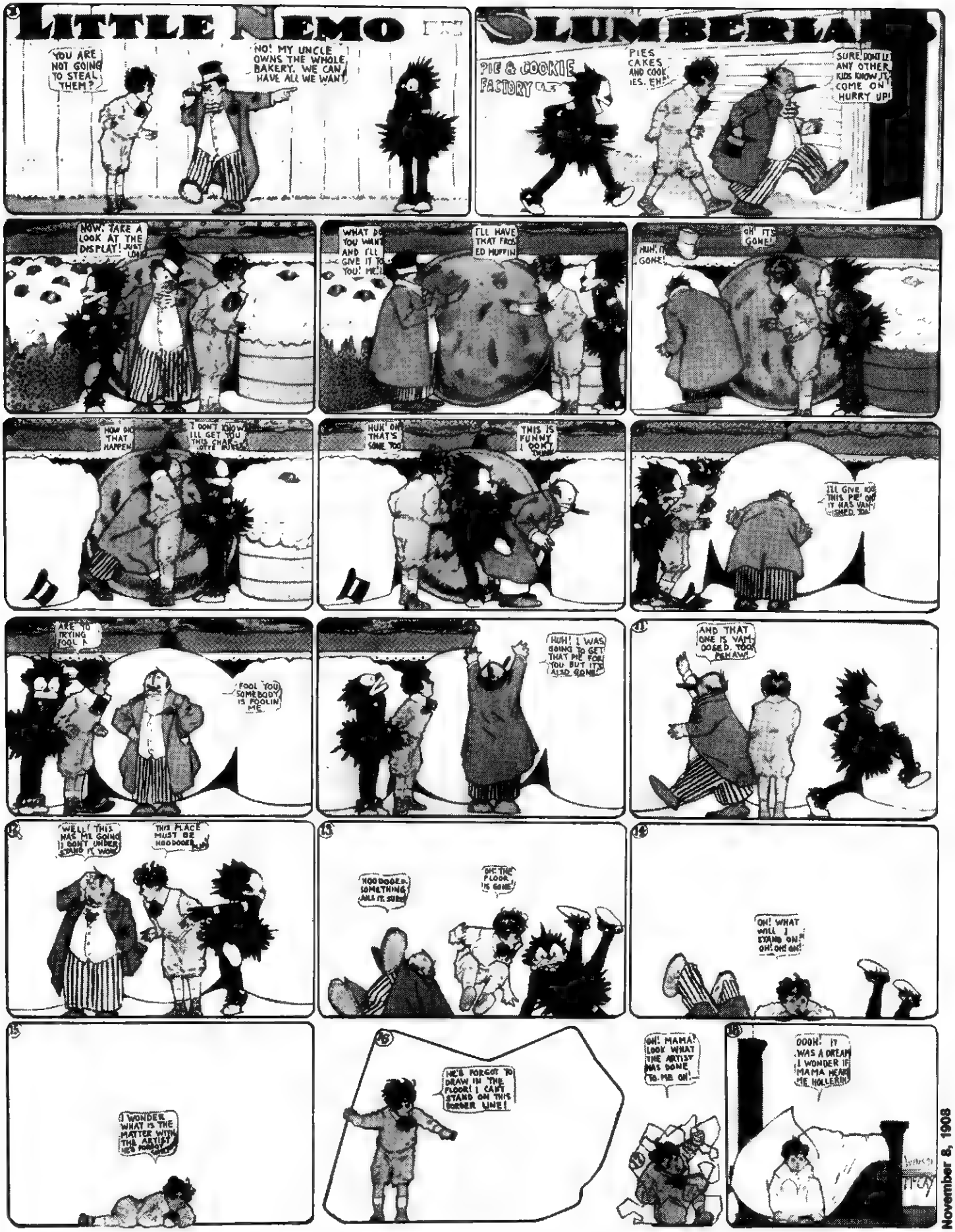

LITTLE NEMO IN SLUMBERLAND
1
NOW I AM READY TO VISIT YOUR SICK SISTER. WHERE DO YOU LIVE. WHERE IS SHE? WE WILL GO TO HER AT ONCE! COME ON!
OH! I'M SO GLAD SHE'S THE NICEST LITTLE GIRL IN SHANTY TOWN! JUST GO ON TO THE ALLEY AND WE'LL SHOW YOU!
COME ON! HE'S GOING TO VISIT SISTER MARY!
HE'S A WONDERFUL KID!!
2
WHERE YOU SEE THE WOMAN THAT'S HER MAMMA THAT'S HER IN THE DOOR
WHICH HOUSE IS SHE IN?
3
NOTICE! TENANTS OF THIS BUILDING MUST VACATE
MAMA! THIS IS LITTLE NEMO. HE'S A WONDERFUL KID. HE WANTS TO SEE SISTER MARY!
4
MARY IS SUCH A SWEET CHILD BUT HAS BEEN SO LONG SICK! IF SHE COULD ONLY GET WELL!
OOOOH! THIS IS AN AWFUL PLACE FOR ANY ONE TO BE SICK IN!
5
MARY DARLING! HERE'S A LITTLE BOY THEY CALL NEMO WHO WANTS TO SEE YOU!
OH! WHAT WHAT A PRETTY GIRL SHE IS OH
6
HUM! HOW QUEER I FEEL!
OH! WHAT A STRANGE PERSON YOU ARE.
AS I WISH, SO SHALL IT BE A BED OF GOOD HEALTH AND AN EASTER GREETING
7
OH! AM I..EH.. AM I DREAMING THAT I AM HERE AND WELL?
I DONT KNOW WHETHER YOU ARE DREAMING OR I AM! I HOPE I'M NOT.
8
YES, IT'S ME WHO IS DREAMING! JUST AS I THOUGHT! PSHAW! HUH!
GET UP NEMO! AND LOOK FOR BUNNY EGGS! COME ON!
WINSOR
April 19, 1908



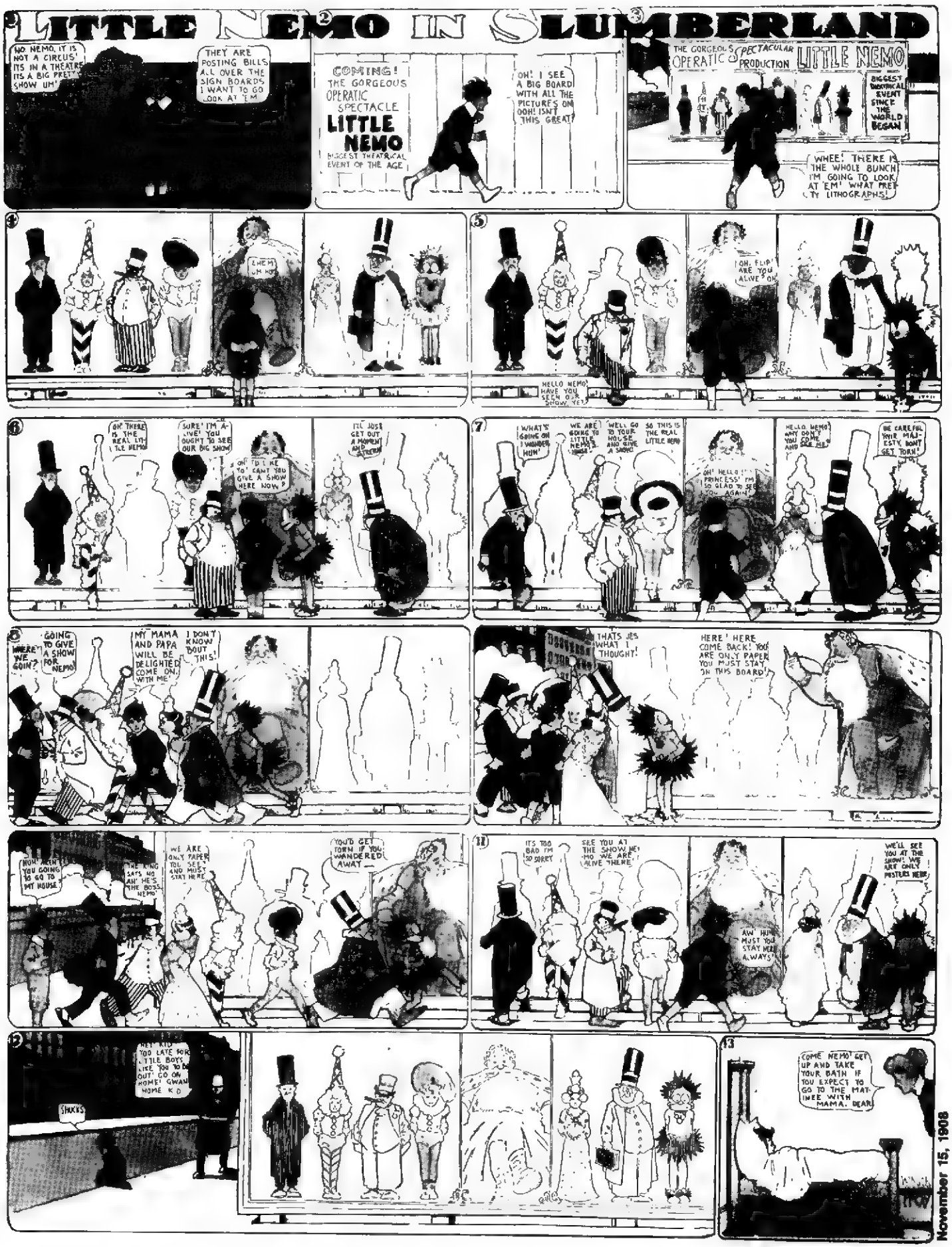
Possibly the most celebrated Sunday page in comics history—the Walking Bed sequence, published on July 26, 1908. Prof. Tom Inge has remarked how *Little Nemo* episodes, especially in the strip's early period, seemed to cover the basic menu of human fears and fantasies as frequently manifested in dreams. This is most certainly true, and if so, this famous page seemed to be McCay's tip of the hat to the Bed. The human characters were often transformed, transferred, or transported, but usually the Bed itself was a very static vehicle. Occasionally it would fly, or float, or grow—and, here, it gallops. Some critics, including the redoubtable Dr. Inge, have read things like anti-clericalism into the fact that the cavorting bed is finally tripped by a church steeple, but we can dream up our own conclusions about that.


LITTLE NEMO IN SLUMBERLAND
GET OVER. NEMO! DO YOU WANT THE WHOLE BED?
HUH! ARE YOU HERE, FLIP? HOW DID—
COURSE I AM! DONT YOU SUPPOSE I EVER SLEEP? BUT I WANT ROOM!
DIDN'T KNOW YOU WERE HERE,—
WHAT ARE THIS BED? IT'S GROWING, ISN'T IT?
I SHOULD SAY IT'S GROWING!
LOOK AT IT! IT'S WALKING WITH US!
THIS IS THE FIRST TIME I EVER SAW A BED WALKING.
HUH! IT'S GOING TO GO OUT DOORS AND TAKE A GOOD ONE.
WE'D BETTER NOT GO.
WHY NOT? CERTAINLY WE'LL GO!
IT'S FEELING GOOD!
IT ACTS LIKE IT'S WILD. I'M AFRAID!
AW! IT'S ONLY PLAYING THAT'S ALL!
A BED LIKES TO GET OUT ONCE IN A WHILE!
I TELL YOU FLIP THIS ISN'T SAFE! I'M GOING TO GET OUT!
HOW ARE YOU GOING TO GET OUT? STAY WHERE YOU ARE, NEMO!
WE CAN RIDE AS FAST AS IT CAN RUN! HUH! IT'S GOING UP ON THE ROOFS!
I WISH I WERE BRAVE LIKE YOU!
A WHOLE LOT OF PEOPLE ARE WISHING THE SAME THING!
WE'VE HIT SOMETHING! OH! OH!
JUST AS I THOUGHT IT WOULD DO! STUMBLE OVER SOMETHING!
DON'T HOLLER NOW, LIKE YOU ARE HURT OR SCARED!
WHOOPEEE! BUT I WAS SCARED! I'M GLAD I WAS JUST DREAMING!
THERE GOES THAT BOY AGAIN! OUT OF BED!
July 26, 1908

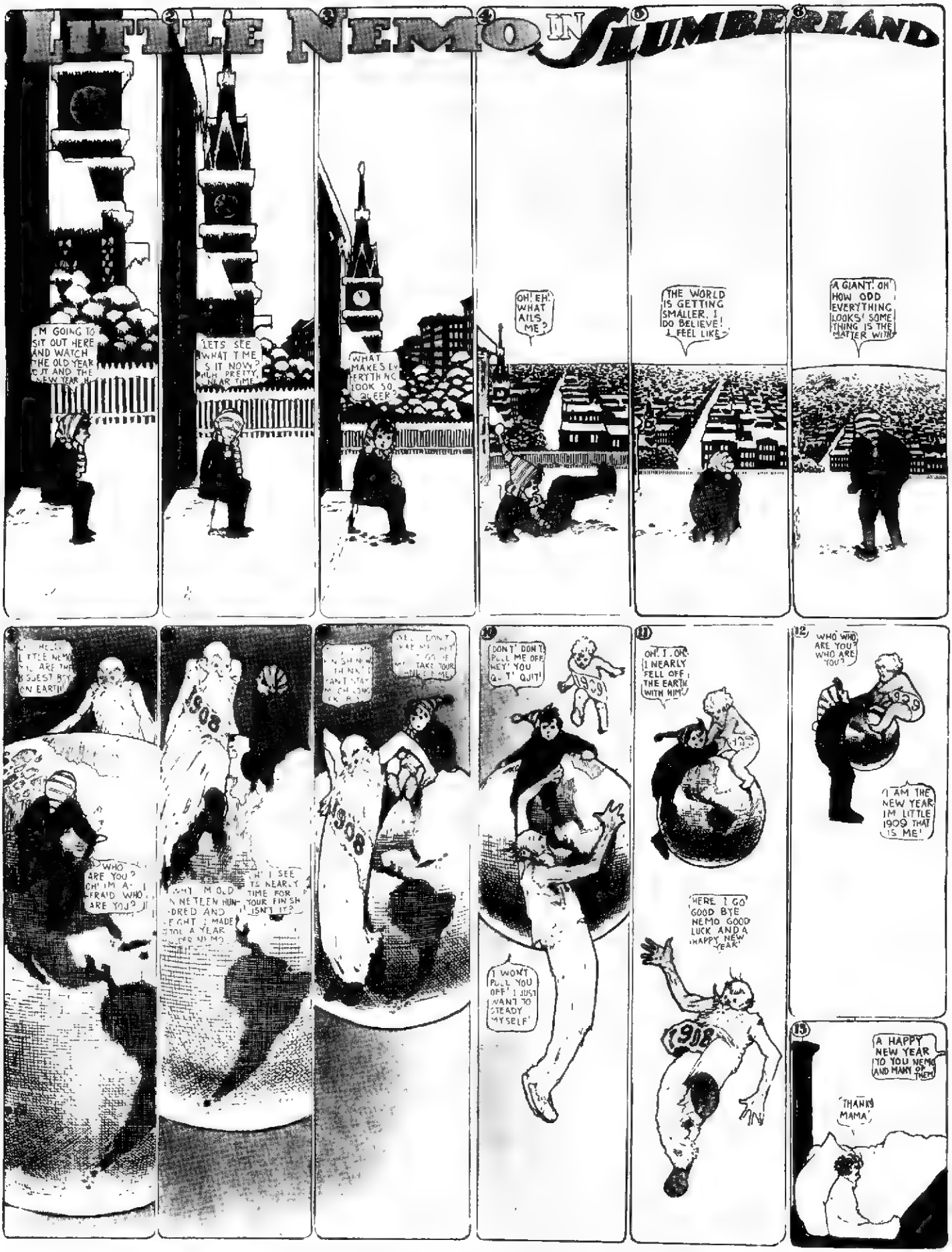
Winsor McCay inaugurated many interesting traditions in *Little Nemo* in terms of format, form, storytelling techniques, graphic representation, and so forth. But none was more interesting, or fun, than that of having the characters in the strip aware of their roles as actors in a paper world. Once he had the characters in Nemo's dream environment progressively appear as if they were drawn by a child—and when they took on that appearance those characters began acting like children! McCay enjoyed being playful not only with his subject, but with his relationship with readers as well. The practices of comic-strip characters refering to their two-dimensional "reality" and being "confined" by the spaces within panels—talking to the artist, leaning on panel borders, looking on dialog balloons as physical objects floating above their heads—was carried forward by a select group of cartoonists including George Herriman (*Krazy Kat*) and Walt Kelly (*Pogo*).


LITTLE NEMO
YOU ARE NOT GOING TO STEAL THEM?
NO! MY UNCLE OWNS THE WHOLE BAKERY. WE CAN HAVE ALL WE WANT
SLUMBERLAND
PIE & COOKIE FACTORY
PIES CAKES AND COOKIES. EH!
SURE! DON'T LET ANY OTHER KIDS KNOW IT. COME ON! HURRY UP!
NOW, TAKE A LOOK AT THE DISPLAY! JUST LOOK
I'LL HAVE THAT FRUIT ED MUFFIN
OH! IT'S GONE!
HUH! IT'S GONE!
HOW DID THAT HAPPEN
I DON'T KNOW WHERE I'LL GET YOU THIS CHARLOTTE RUSSE
HUH! OH! THAT'S SOME TOO
THIS IS FUNNY I DON'T THINK
I'LL GIVE YOU THIS PIE BUT IT HAS VANISHED, TOO
ARE YO TRYING FOOL ME
FOOL YOU SOMEBODY IS FOOLIN ME
HUH! I WAS GOING TO GET THAT PIE FOR YOU BUT IT'S ALSO GONE
AND THAT ONE IS VANISHED, TOO! HAW HAW!
WELL! THIS WAS ME GOING TO DON'T UNDERSTAND IT WOW
THIS PLACE MUST BE HOODOOED, HUH
HOODOOED, SOMETHING AILS IT, SURE!
OH! THE FLOOR IS GONE!
OH! WHAT WILL I STAND ON? OH! OH! OH!
I WONDER WHAT IS THE MATTER WITH THE ARTIST HE'S MADE A MISTAKE
HE'S FORGOT TO DRAW IN THE FLOOR! I CAN'T STAND ON THIS BORDER LINE!
OH! MAMA! LOOK WHAT THE ARTIST HAS DONE TO ME OH!
OOOH! IT WAS A DREAM. I WONDER IF MAMA HEARD ME HOLLERIN
November 8, 1908

Probably the most haunting and melancholy of any *Little Nemo* page. In it McCay slyly inserts a plug for the current licensing of his great creation, the Broadway production of *Little Nemo*, with music by Victor Herbert. The "real" Nemo, in his dream, regards a poster for the show, and one by one the characters in the strip and play—all of his friends from Slumberland—come to life, walking off the billboard. Little Nemo is in virtual ecstasy, for it appears that here is a dream, finally, that will have a happy ending; all of the characters (including, curiously, the strip-version of Nemo himself) run away to play. No danger, no monsters, no impending catastrophe. Just King Morpheus himself, reminding the figures of their true nature and ordering their return to billboard existence ("You'd get torn if you wandered away. . ."). In the penultimate panel—washed in sad purple tone in the original Sunday page—Nemo sits on the curb, absolutely dejected. Even a policeman exhibits no compassion; as his friends stare mute and lifeless on the poster, the cop rushes Nemo away. When Nemo awakes, his mother refers to going to the matinee after all . . . but again, basically, Winsor McCay has conferred frustration and sad disappointment on the star of his strip.

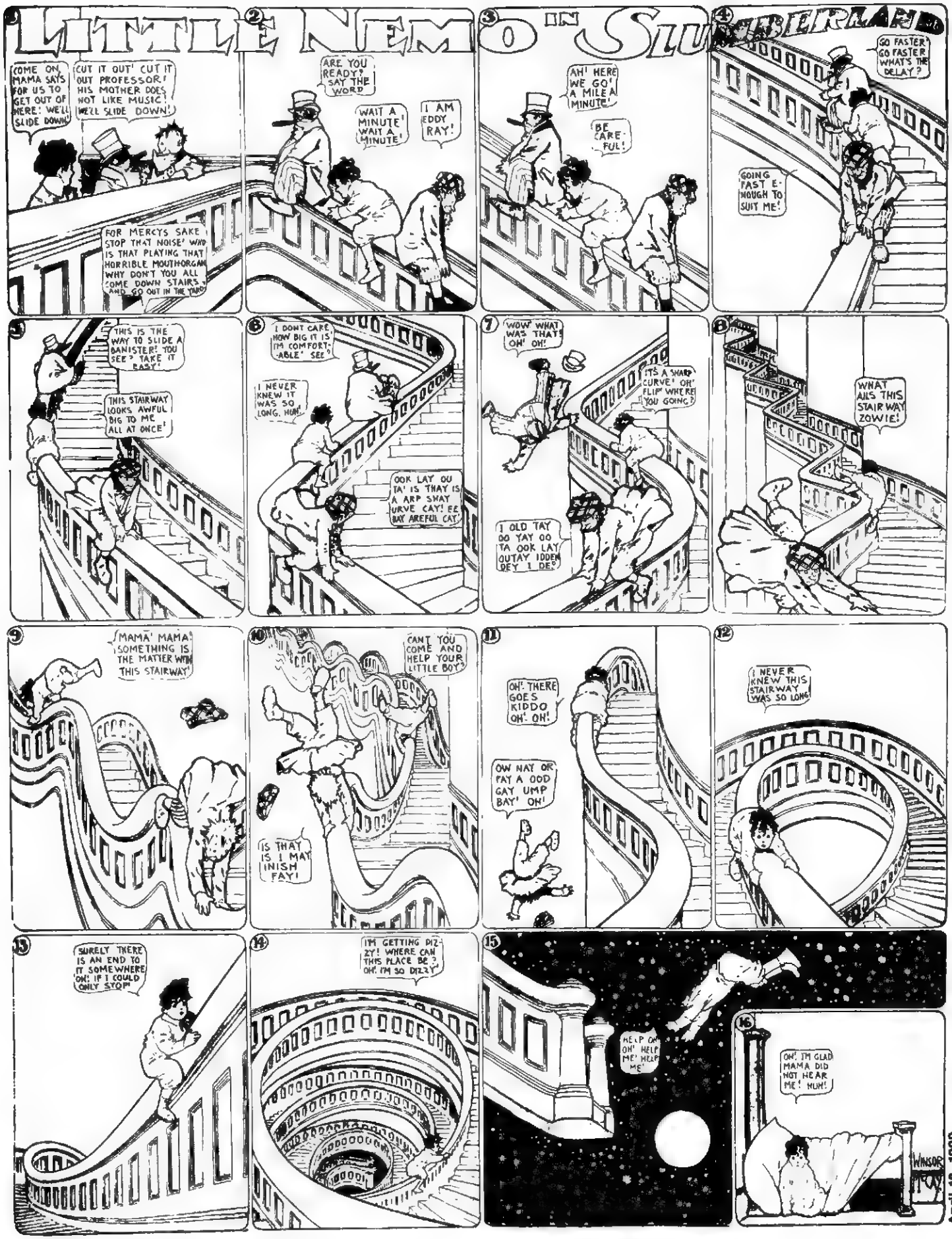

LITTLE NEMO IN SLUMBERLAND
NO NEMO, IT IS NOT A CIRCUS! ITS IN A THEATRE! ITS A BIG PRETTY SHOW UM!
THEY ARE POSTING BILLS ALL OVER THE SIGN BOARDS I WANT TO GO LOOK AT 'EM
COMING! THE GORGEOUS OPERATIC SPECTACLE LITTLE NEMO BIGGEST THEATRICAL EVENT OF THE AGE
OH! I SEE A BIG BOARD WITH ALL THE PICTURES ON OOH! ISNT THIS GREAT?
THE GORGEOUS OPERATIC SPECTACULAR PRODUCTION LITTLE NEMO
BIGGEST THEATRICAL EVENT SINCE THE WORLD BEGAN
WHEE! THERE IS THE WHOLE BUNCH! I'M GOING TO LOOK AT 'EM' WHAT PRETTY LITHOGRAPHS!
OH, FLIP! ARE YOU ALIVE 'OH
HELLO NEMO! HAVE YOU SEEN OUR SHOW YET?
OH THERE IS THE REAL LITTLE NEMO
SURE! I'M ALIVE! YOU OUGHT TO SEE OUR BIG SHOW
OH! I'D LIKE TO! CANT YOU GIVE A SHOW HERE NOW?
I'LL JUST GET OUT A MOMENT AND RETURN
WHAT'S GOING ON I WONDER, HUM!
WE ARE GOING TO LITTLE NEMO'S HOUSE
WELL GO TO YOUR HOUSE AND GIVE A SHOW!
SO THIS IS THE REAL LITTLE NEMO
OH! HELLO PRINCESS! I'M SO GLAD TO SEE YOU AGAIN!
HELLO NEMO! WHY DON'T YOU COME AND SEE ME?
BE CAREFUL YOUR MAJESTY, DON'T GET TORN!
WHERE WE GOIN?
GOING TO GIVE A SHOW FOR NEMO!
MY MAMA AND PAPA WILL BE DELIGHTED COME ON WITH ME!
I DON'T KNOW BOUT THIS!
THATS JES WHAT I THOUGHT!
HERE! HERE COME BACK! YOU ARE ONLY PAPER YOU MUST STAY IN THIS BOARD!
NUH! AIN'T YOU GOING TO GO TO MY HOUSE
THE KING SAYS NO AH! HE'S THE BOSS, NEMO!
WE ARE ONLY PAPER YOU SEE! AND MUST STAY HERE
YOU'D GET TORN IF YOU WANDERED AWAY—
IT'S TOO BAD I'M SO SORRY
SEE YOU AT THE SHOW! NO WE ARE ALIVE THERE!
AW HUM MUST YOU STAY HERE ALWAYS?
WE'LL SEE YOU AT THE SHOW! WE ARE ONLY PAPERS HERE!
SHUCKS
HUM! AID TOO LATE FOR LITTLE BOYS LIKE YOU TO BE OUT! GO ON HOME! GWAN HOME K.O.
COME NEMO! GET UP AND TAKE YOUR BATH IF YOU EXPECT TO GO TO THE MATINEE WITH MAMA, DEAR!
November 15, 1908

The lady? or the tiger? McCay draws a changing physical situation very plainly, but by the graphic evidence alone we cannot tell whether Nemo grows larger or the world grows smaller. Nemo himself supposes the former, but, as we have seen, his perceptions are not always correct in his slumber. In any event it is part of McCay's brand of logic in the strip that we accept that only Nemo, no other elements in the world, is in juxtaposition to the earth, absent the arrivals of Old Man 1908 and Baby 1909. And how easy it is to take for granted the stunning graphic boldness of this page's design. The vertical panels are severely elongated—one might think that horizontal panels would better display the gradually curving horizon-line—and as the unique and static panels progress, we as readers receive a very sense of the transformation occuring. In color, too—and we regret these reproductions can't be in full subtle colors as are the pages in the *Complete Little Nemo in Slumberland* book series—there is a progressive blending from a blue sky to green to purple to orange to yellow. McCay's mastery and innovations are all the more impressive when we remind ourselves that this work was done a scant decade after the development of the comic strip.


LITTLE NEMO IN SLUMBERLAND
I'M GOING TO SIT OUT HERE AND WATCH THE OLD YEAR OUT AND THE NEW YEAR IN
LETS SEE WHAT TIME IS IT NOW? HUM PRETTY NEAR TIME.
WHAT MAKES EVERYTHING LOOK SO QUEER?
OH! EH! WHAT AILS ME?
THE WORLD IS GETTING SMALLER. I DO BELIEVE! I FEEL LIKE
A GIANT! OH! HOW ODD EVERYTHING LOOKS! SOMETHING IS THE MATTER WITH
HELLO LITTLE NEMO I ARE THE BIGGEST BOY ON EARTH!
WHO ARE YOU? OH! I'M AFRAID WHO I ARE YOU?
1908
1908
1909
DON'T DON'T PULL ME OFF HEY! YOU Q-T' QUIT!
I WON'T PULL YOU OFF! I JUST WANT TO STEADY MYSELF
OH! I OH! I NEARLY FELL OFF THE EARTH WITH HIM!
HERE I GO GOOD BYE NEMO GOOD LUCK AND A HAPPY NEW YEAR!
1908
1909
WHO WHO ARE YOU? WHO ARE YOU?
I AM THE NEW YEAR I'M LITTLE 1909 THAT IS ME!
A HAPPY NEW YEAR TO YOU NEMO AND MANY OF THEM!
THANKS MAMA!

December 27, 1908

Is there a debate that Winsor McCay was the Father of Animation? Even if there had been no animated *Little Nemo* or *Gertie the Dinosaur*, pages such as this would have been enough to inspire the rising generation of animation artists. McCay was a master in certain *Little Nemo* pages at depicting action and motion. The Cubists, in a few years, were to experiment with dispersal of form; McCay and other cartoonists (principally A.B. Frost in magazine cartoons, and early animators) experimented with dispersal of movement. The static panel grid well serves McCay's purpose here, to concentrate our vision on the characters' descent; sparse backgrounds also reinforce the fantastic nature of the slide. For all the bizarre twists (literally and figuratively) in this sequence, there is an internal logic. That logic, that consistency, is the primary hallmark of Winsor McCay's amazing work on *Little Nemo in Slumberland*. The pages in this portfolio are but a sample . . . and we invite your attention to the faithful, oversized, color reproductions in the definitive four-volume collection that, we hope, will finally do justice to this classic comic strip.


LITTLE NEMO IN SLUMBERLAND
1
COME ON, MAMA SAYS FOR US TO GET OUT OF HERE! WE'LL SLIDE DOWN!
CUT IT OUT! CUT IT OUT PROFESSOR! HIS MOTHER DOES NOT LIKE MUSIC! WE'LL SLIDE DOWN!
FOR MERCYS SAKE STOP THAT NOISE! WHO IS THAT PLAYING THAT HORRIBLE MOUTHORGAN WHY DON'T YOU ALL COME DOWN STAIRS AND GO OUT IN THE YARD
2
ARE YOU READY? SAY THE WORD
WAIT A MINUTE! WAIT A MINUTE!
I AM EDDY RAY!
3
AH! HERE WE GO! A MILE A MINUTE!
BE CARE-FUL!
4
GO FASTER! GO FASTER! WHAT'S THE DELAY?
GOING FAST E-NOUGH TO SUIT ME!
5
THIS IS THE WAY TO SLIDE A BANISTER! YOU SEE? TAKE IT EASY!
THIS STAIRWAY LOOKS AWFUL BIG TO ME ALL AT ONCE!
6
I DONT CARE HOW BIG IT IS I'M COMFORT-ABLE! SEE?
I NEVER KNEW IT WAS SO LONG. HUM!
OOK LAY OU TA' IS THAY IS A ARP SHAY URVE CAY! EE BAY AREFUL CAT
7
WOW! WHAT WAS THAT? OH! OH!
IT'S A SHARP CURVE! OH! FLIP! WHERE YOU GOING?
I OLD TAY OO YAY OO TA OOK LAY OUTAY IDDEN DEY I DE?
8
WHAT AILS THIS STAIR WAY ZOWIE!
9
MAMA! MAMA! SOMETHING IS THE MATTER WITH THIS STAIRWAY!
10
CANT YOU COME AND HELP YOUR LITTLE BOY?
IS THAT IS I MAY INISH FAY!
11
OH! THERE GOES KIDDO OH! OH!
OW NAY OR FAY A OOD GAY UMP BAY! OH!
12
I NEVER KNEW THIS STAIRWAY WAS SO LONG!
13
SURELY THERE IS AN END TO IT SOMEWHERE OH! IF I COULD ONLY STOP!
14
I'M GETTING DIZ-ZY! WHERE CAN THIS PLACE BE? OH! I'M SO DIZZY
15
HELP OH! OH! HELP ME! HELP ME!
16
OH! I'M GLAD MAMA DID NOT HEAR ME! HUM!
WINSOR MCCAY
April 18, 1909

"DUMB IT DOWN"

BY BRIAN WALKER

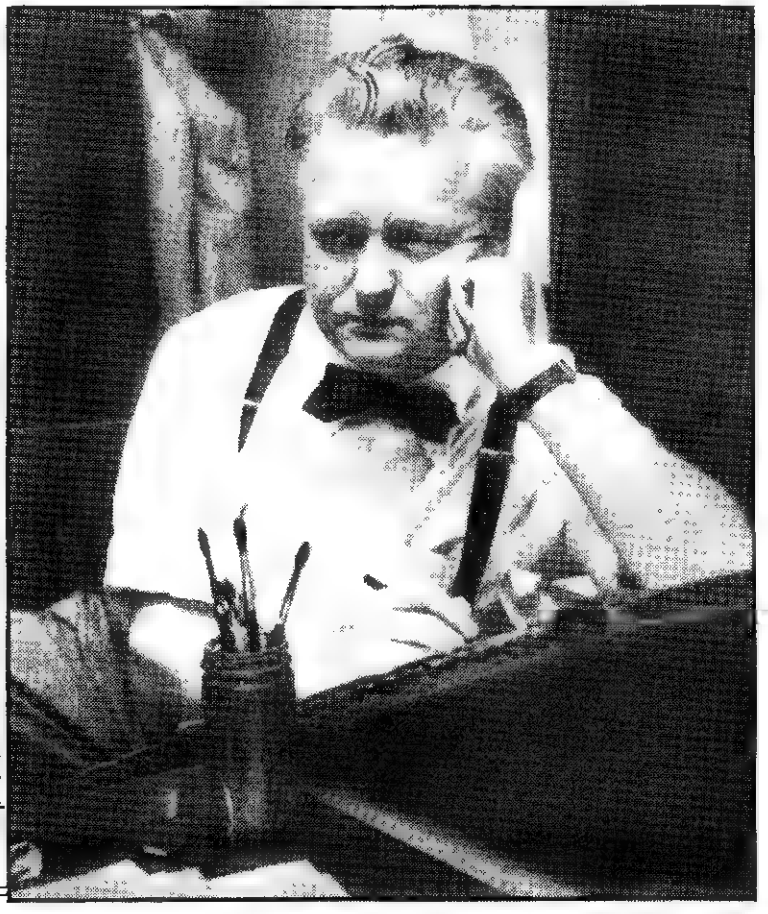
The Comic-Strip Craftsmanship and Common Denominators of Ernie Bushmiller

Comic strips and cartoons have in part proved their permeation of the culture by the fact that they have sometimes earned their way into the dictionary, which is civilization's—if not language's—social register. Recognition, acceptance, a nod to universality. . . these things you have achieved when you are a distinct dictionary entry all by yourself. Rube Goldberg did it by "inventing" his comic monstrosities, and today, long after Rube's death and the daily mechanical offerings of Prof. Lucifer Gorgonzola Butts, people who never heard of either party refer to "Rube Goldberg inventions." Sure.

Ernie Bushmiller arguably achieved something more unique. In the American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language, *illustrating the definition of "comic strip," there is a daily* Nancy *in the margin.*

Of course the editors had to choose something, if they were to use an illustration at all, but it is interesting and revealing that they chose Nancy. *The argument can be made that* Nancy *is the most representative of comic strips in the clinical sense. And in fact it might have been the very thing Bushmiller strove for when he referred to his formula for comic-strip creation: "Dumb It Down"—keep it simple, basic, and aimed at the lowest common denominator.*

Carried in a certain direction, this formula could be a prescription for loathsome twaddle, and indeed many comic strips have tried to be all things to all people, so bland that they offend no one but neither passionately attract anybody.



All photos from the collection of James Carlsson

With Bushmiller the opposite happened: Nancy *was superficially superficial, but he constantly tuned and re-tuned his engine so that the strip became a playful exercise in what a strip could be in its purest state, how a strip could be most basically constructed, and how visuals, themes, characters, and gags could interact to produce an interesting and entertaining comic strip.*

Here was Bushmiller not trying to be Chekhov—or even Billy DeBeck—but succeeding quite nicely at what he modestly attempted. There is nothing patronizing about such assessments, no praising by faint damns. The Mad Magazine *crew admired Bushmiller's craft, and his present-day admirers (Bushmiller died in 1982) include underground cartoonists, otherwise iconoclastic and avant-garde, like Denis Kitchen, Bill Griffith, and Art Spiegelman. Among the gallery set, the familiar imagery of* Nancy *was borrowed, or parodied, by Andy Warhol and Vernon Fisher.*

Brian Walker has compiled a celebration and history of the Nancy *strip for Comicana/Henry Holt called, pure and simple,* The Best of Ernie Bushmiller's Nancy *($10.95). Far from "dumbing it down," however, Walker has provided a thoughtful compilation of a great number of strips that will surprise and impress even Bushmiller partisans.*

The following text is an abridgement of early chapters in Walker's book, and the portfolio is a sampling of material from the book as well as strips and pages not included in the book.

—REM—

Ernest Paul Bushmiller was born in the South Bronx, near 137th Street on August 23, 1905. "When I was a small child," he remembered, "we lived in a poor neighborhood in a cold water flat with gas lights. Although we were poor, we ate well and always were secure in the knowledge that our parents loved us, and we loved them." He had two sisters, one younger and one older and his parents were both recent immigrants.

Ernest Bushmiller Sr., Ernie's father, was born in Germany . . . the youngest of six children of a high school teacher father and a newspaper reporter mother. Both parents died when Ernie Sr. was one year old, leaving him in the care of a semi-senile grandmother. After her death, when he was fifteen, Ernie Sr. sailed away to the New World.

Elizabeth Hall, Ernie's mother, was the daughter of Irish Protestants who lived in a thatched roofed farmhouse in Northern Ireland. All three of her brothers were 6'4" policemen in Belfast.

Ernie's father was a major influence on his life. Ernie Sr. was a talented artist and performed stand-up chalk-talks on the vaudeville circuit for a short time, but couldn't support his family doing this. Because of the language barrier, he was only able to make a meager living bartending, selling insurance and working at various other odd jobs. In his spare time, he was a voracious reader with an impressive knowledge of history and literature. Unfortunately, Ernie, Sr. never found a profitable livelihood that made use of his artistic and intellectual interests. He was successful, however, in encouraging his son's aptitudes, and Ernie Jr. inherited his father's love for literature and art. Later in his life, he had a large library and was a student of American and English humor. Ernie always talked about his father with pride and admiration.

"On my entire street there were only two kids that went to high school," Bushmiller once remembered. "That was the equivalent in those days of making Phi Beta Kappa." He quit school himself after the eighth grade and, at the age of fourteen, applied for two jobs, one as a crew member on a steamship line and the other as a copy boy for the *New York World*. Fortunately for him, as well as for the future enjoyment of millions of newspaper readers, he took the latter offer.

"I was the personal office boy for Alexander Woollcott, Heywood Broun, Franklin P. Adams, Walter Lippmann and many other immortals," Ernie recalled. "As the years went on, I became their personal friend. I believe the Lord tapped me on the shoulder."

"I remember I got nine dollars a week on the *World*," Ernie once said, "but because I was a copy boy in the art deparment,

Ernie Bushmiller, Sr.

I'd have paid them nine dollars, if I'd had it, just to let me hang around." The ambitious Bushmiller managed to pick up an occasional drawing or reporting job in between his regular copy-boy chores. One of his first published works was a crossword puzzle, which he initialed in the corner. His big breakthrough came when he was assigned to illustrate a Sunday feature of Harry Houdini's magic. The young teenager was treated to the thrilling experience of having the legendary illusionist demonstrate his latest tricks to him in Houdini's New York apartment.

For two years while he was working as an office boy on the *New York World*, Bushmiller attended night classes at the National Academy of Design. Ernie measured himself against his fellow students, who were turning out landscapes, portraits, and still lifes, and decided he'd better become a cartoonist.

He couldn't have found himself in a more stimulating environment. While at the *New York World*, he ran errands for, and eventually rubbed elbows with, some of the pioneers of the comic strip form. The creator of *The Katzenjammer Kids*, Rudolph Dirks, often worked in the newspaper art room, as did many cartoonists of that era.

Milt Gross, one of the most talented humorists of his time, became like a godfather to the young Bushmiller. Milt wrote a weekly column of prose for the *World* entitled *Gross Exaggerations*, and introduced a number of wildly hilarious comics features into its pages, including *Nize Baby*, *Count Screwloose* and *Dave's Delicatessen*.

H.T. Webster, the genius behind *The Timid Soul*, was another *World* staffer. Bushmiller and Webster were to become lifelong friends and were neighbors in Stamford, Connecticut, briefly before Webster passed away in 1953.

The wide-eyed copy boy soaked up all this guidance and inspiration like a sponge. He was preparing himself for his entry into the field as a full-time cartoonist. The opportunity that he had been waiting for came along early in 1925.

On October 9, 1922, the *The New York World* launched its answer to *Winnie Winkle the Breadwinner* and *Tillie the Toiler*. *Fritzi Ritz* was a stereotypical flapper strip that capitalized on the excitement of the Roaring Twenties and the emancipation of American women. Created originally by Larry Whittington, *Fritzi Ritz* was about a New York glamour girl turned movie actress. In 1925, Whittington was hired by King Features Syndicate, to produce another pretty-girl strip entitled *Mazie the Model*. Having caught the attention of the *World* editors with his work on the Houdini feature, Bushmiller was brought in to "ghost" *Fritzi Ritz*. Although Ernie signed the comic strip as early as May, 1925, Larry Whittington's name still appeared above *Fritzi Ritz*, on the by-line, until May, 1926. It wasn't until then that Bushmiller, now in his early twenties, got full credit for a strip he had written and drawn for over a year.

In addition to his mentors—Dirks and Webster—Bushmiller had many other friends and contemporaries on the *World* staff. They included: Vic Forsythe (*Joe Jinks*), J. Carver Pusey (*Benny*), R.M. Brinkerhoff (*Little Mary Mixup*), A.W. Nugent (*Puzzles*), Maurice Ketten (*Can You Beat It*), Harry Haenigsen (staff cartoonist), Rollin Kirby (editorial cartoonist), Bud Counihan (*Little Napoleon*), Fred Locher (*Cicero Sapp*), Denys Wortman (*Everyday Movies*) and Will B. Johnstone (current event cartoonist).

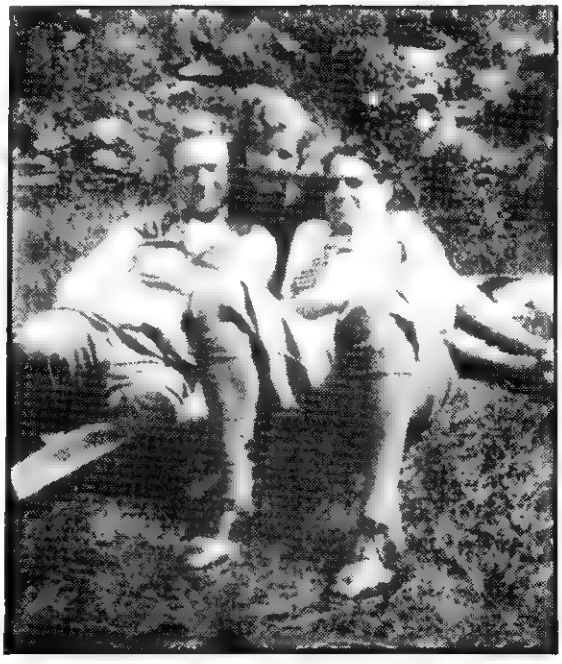
Ernie, like many other newspaper artists of the day, also sold free-lance cartoons to humor magazines, such as *Judge*.

The *New York World*, the newspaper that had pioneered the American comic strip with the introduction of Richard Outcault's *Yellow Kid* in 1895, folded in 1931. The *World*'s affiliate syndicate, Press Publishing Co., merged with Metropolitan Features to form United Feature Syndicate. It was the height of the Depression, and Ernie Bushmiller was fortunate to have a job.

After the *World* went out of business, a number of cartoonists, including Milt Gross, H.T. Webster, Dow Walling and Ernie Bushmiller opened up a co-operative studio on the forty-fourth floor of the Chrysler Building. Practical jokes and the usual office shenanigans eventually convinced them to close down this ambitious undertaking. "We were truly sorry to break up the combine," Ernie admitted. "But it was done for the best interests of everybody concerned. Our daily luncheon club meetings were something to talk about."

By the mid-1930's, *Fritzi Ritz* was being distributed to over 200 daily and 100 Sunday newspapers by United Feature Syndicate. Ernie Bushmiller once claimed that "I'd rather be a cartoonist than anything I can think of. In fact I'd keep on drawing comics if I hit the Irish Sweepstakes." At this point in his career, Ernie was content to be doing what he loved best.

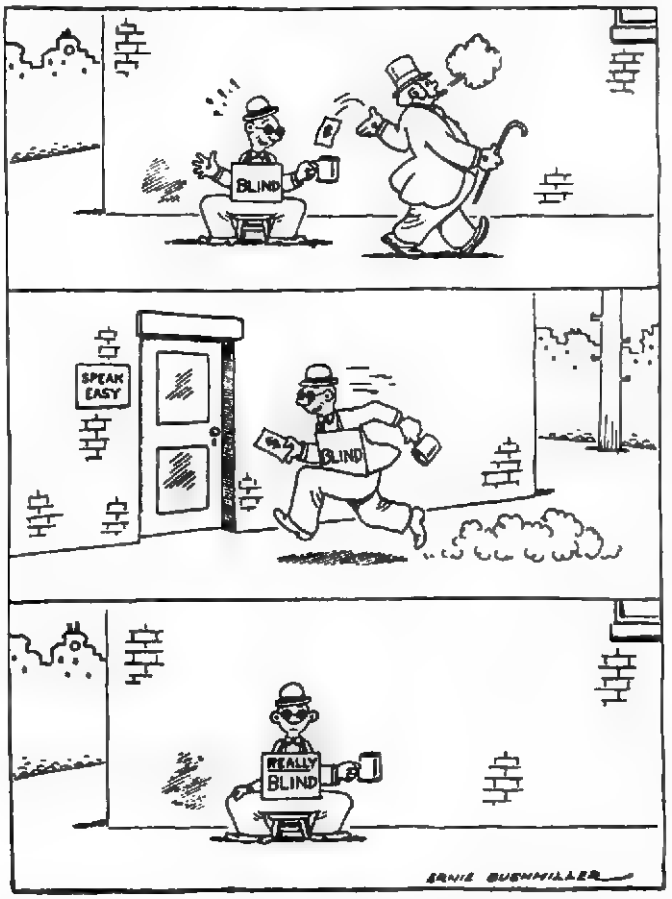
Ernie Bushmiller, his wife Abbie, and cartoonist Milt Gross.



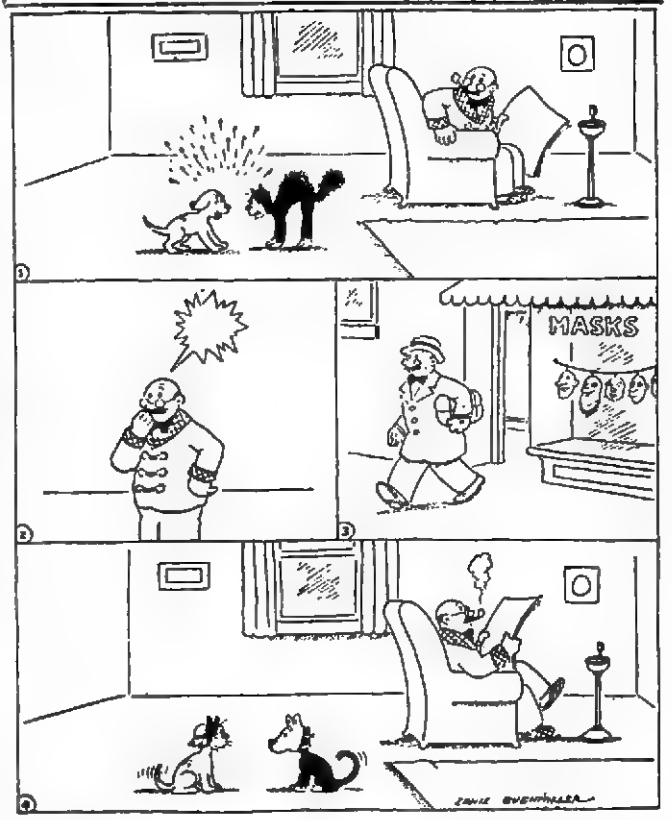
The official story in 1938 claimed that Ernie Bushmiller changed the name of his strip from *Fritzi Ritz* to *Nancy* in response to a letter from an editor in Owensboro, Kentucky. The little niece Nancy had already pushed Fritzi out of the picture by then, and the name change was merely a formality. Sluggo, Nancy's ragmuffin pal, was introduced in January, 1938 and the two of them together were more than a match for any cartoonist or editor. Ernie remembered his old friend Milt Gross telling him, "your future is in that little girl." He was right.

Within a few years after Nancy's take-over, Bushmiller began abandoning continuing storylines as his creation evolved into the quintessential gag-a-day strip. At the same time, the feature's circulation and popularity soared. By the late 1940s it had become one of the top strips in the country. In 1947, it

'BLIND' PIG IS RIGHT!



THE PEACEMAKER



This page: various newspaper and magazine gags of the 1920s by Ernie Bushmiller.

won reader polls in the *Milwaukee Journal* and the *Philadelphia Daily News*, and advertisers in the Sunday comics sections frequently demanded that their ads run on the same page as *Nancy*.

The *New Republic* stated in an article in 1949: "It is possible that *Nancy* is the best comic today, principally because it combines a very strong, independent imagination with a simplification of the best tradition of comic drawing. *Nancy* is daily concerned with making a pictorial gag either about or on the affairs of a group of bright, unsentimental children who have identical fireplug shapes, inch-long names (Sluggo, Winky, Tilly, Nancy) and genial, self-possessed temperaments."

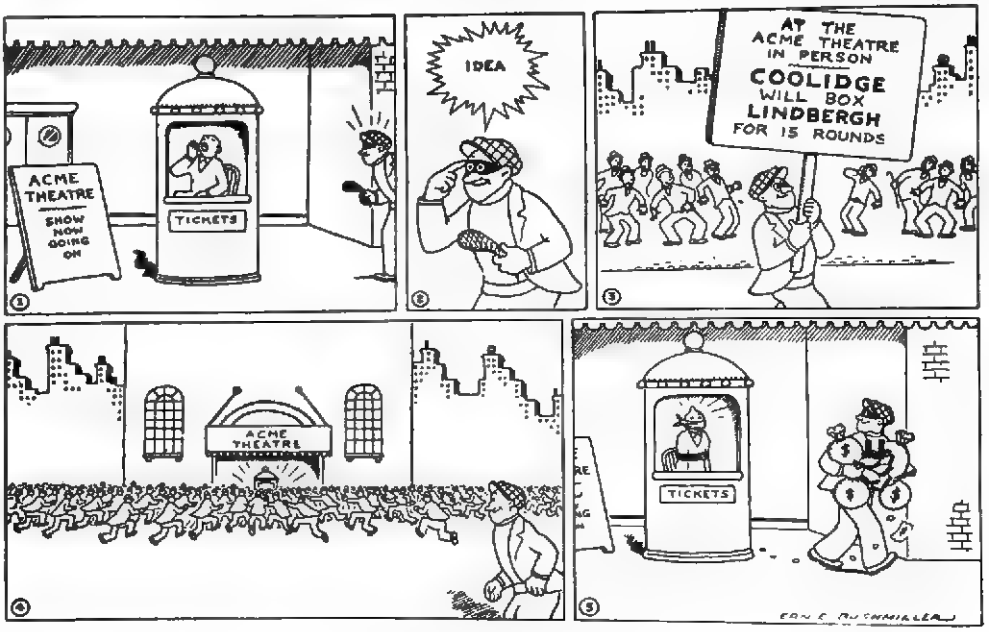
Looking back with the perspective of ensuing decades, today's *Nancy* scholars view the years between 1944 and 1959 as Bushmiller's classic period. During this time, Ernie honed his gag formula, refined his economical graphic style, and introduced classic themes that were to be recycled into a myriad of forms.

Visual surrealism drifted into the strip via Nancy's dreams. Conscious or unconscious, Bushmiller's world was inhabited by Martians, ghosts, rubber men and lion-hearted mailmen.

This surrealism was enhanced by the graphic style of *Nancy*. Patterns, shapes, innovative panel layouts, distortion and dramatic use of black-and-white contrasts were devices Ernie used to create a unique universe with his own laws of cartoon physics.

Ernie worked on an unconventional but regular schedule. Starting on Sunday evenings, he would finish six daily strips by Tuesday evening, often staying up until 2 AM. After taking two days off in the middle of the week, he then tackled the Sunday page on Friday and Saturday. A night owl, Ernie often said

(continued on page 43)

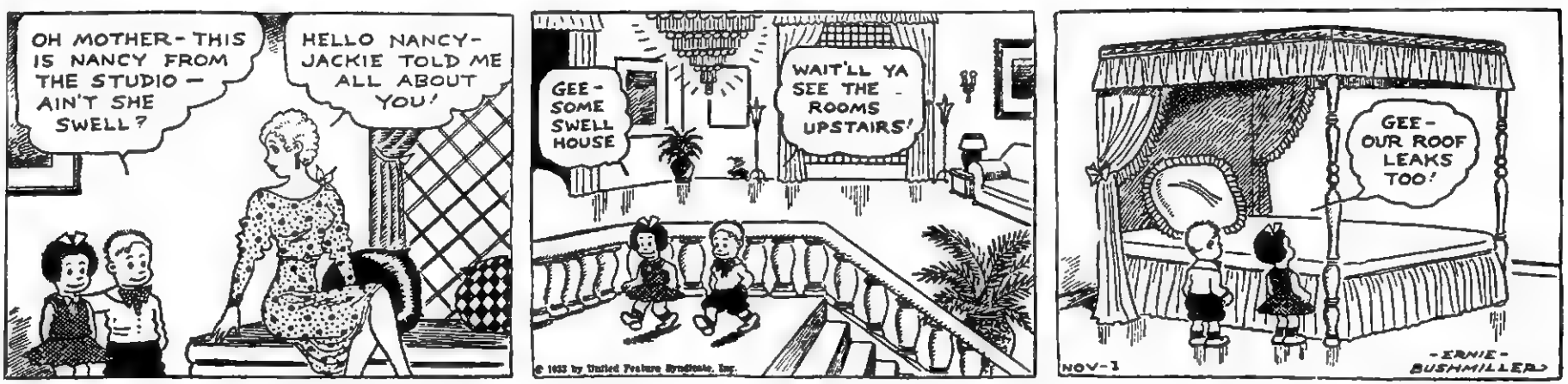


Making it worth while

THROUGH THE AGES WITH NANCY, FRITZI, AND SLUGGO

CAN YOU IMAGINE— MY BOY FRIEND DON'T LIKE MY NEW HAT!
WELL- WHY DON'T YOU CHANGE IT ?
OH- CHANGING A HAT IS SUCH AN AWFUL LOT OF TROUBLE—
I THINK I'LL CHANGE MY BOY FRIEND— THAT'LL BE EASIER!
ERNIE BUSHMILLER - JAN-15

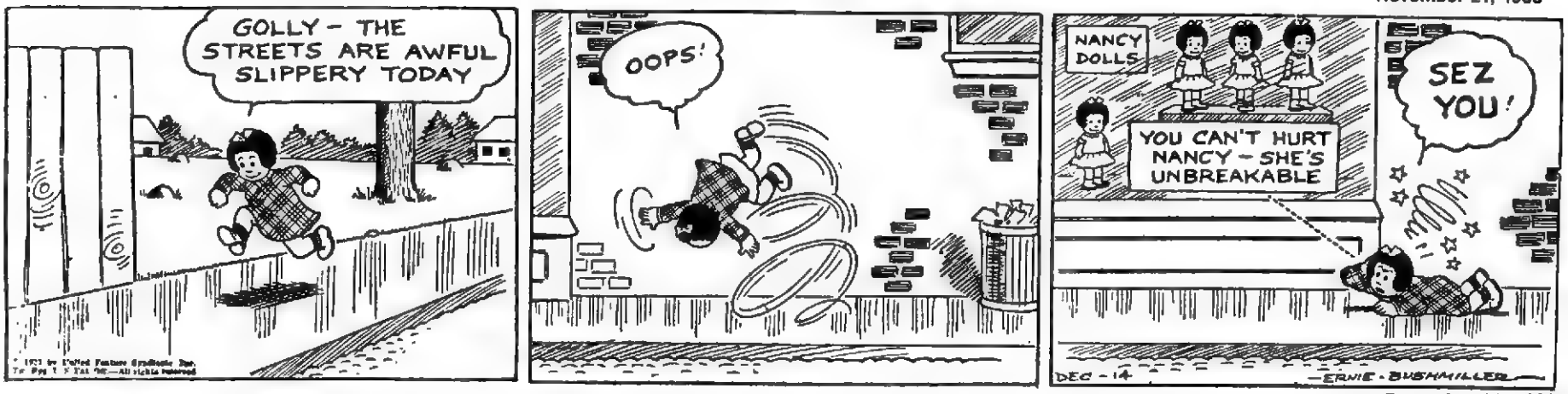
January 15, 1927


OH MOTHER- THIS IS NANCY FROM THE STUDIO— AIN'T SHE SWELL?
HELLO NANCY- JACKIE TOLD ME ALL ABOUT YOU!
GEE- SOME SWELL HOUSE
WAIT'LL YA SEE THE ROOMS UPSTAIRS!
GEE- OUR ROOF LEAKS TOO!
NOV-1
-ERNIE- BUSHMILLER

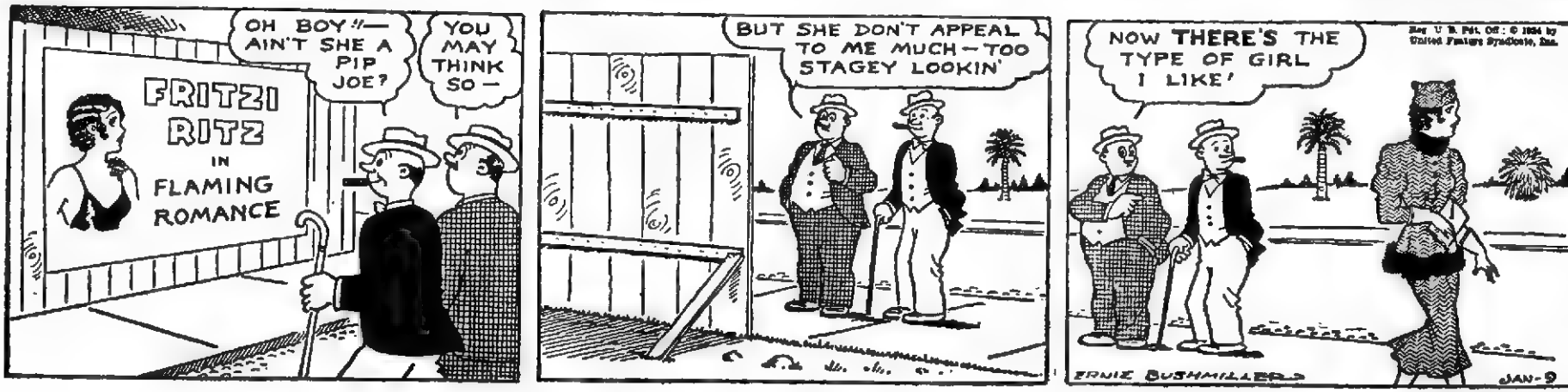
November 1, 1933

OH NANCY - WILL YOU CALL UP THE STUDIO AND TELL THEM I WON'T BE IN TODAY - I'M SO TIRED FROM THAT DANCE LAST NIGHT!
O.K
-MY AUNT FRITZI CAN'T GO OUT TODAY 'CAUSE SHE'S ALL IN FROM BEING OUT - TOMORROW IF SHE'S NOT ALL IN SHE'LL GO OUT AND BE IN!
WELL - I TOLD HIM - BUT HE DIDN'T SEEM TO UNDERSTAND - HE'S AWFUL DUMB!
!
NOV-21
ERNIE BUSHMILLER

November 21, 1933



December 14, 1933


OH BOY!!— AIN'T SHE A PIP JOE?
YOU MAY THINK SO —
FRITZI RITZ IN FLAMING ROMANCE
BUT SHE DON'T APPEAL TO ME MUCH — TOO STAGEY LOOKIN'
NOW THERE'S THE TYPE OF GIRL I LIKE!
ERNIE BUSHMILLER
JAN-9

January 9, 1934

AH HERE'S A NICE LITTLE COUNTRY HOTEL — MAYBE THIS WOULD BE A GOOD PLACE TO SPEND OUR WEEK'S VACATION
HOTEL
YES-THIS ROOM WILL DO- NOW WHERE IS THE BELL IN CASE I WANT SOMETHING?
AIN'T NO BELL — YA JUST STAMP ON TH' FLOOR!
STAMP ON THE FLOOR??
YEP- THEN TH' MAN IN TH' ROOM UNDER YOU WILL COME DOWN AND COMPLAIN TO ME AND I'LL KNOW YA WANT SOMETHING!
MAY-22 -ERNIE- BUSHMILLER

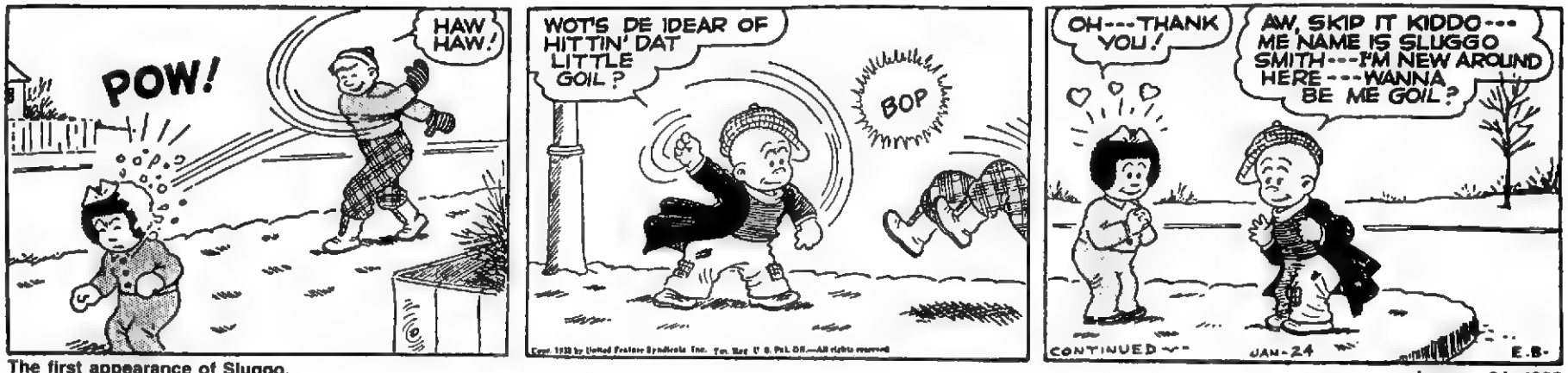
July 18, 1934

BILLS- BILLS- BILLS
OH-THERE GOES THE PHONE
MISS RITZ- YOUR PHONE BILL IS LONG OVERDUE SO WE'RE GOING TO CUT OFF YOUR TELEPHONE SERVICE!
OH DEAR!
IT'S GOING TO BE AWFULLY HARD TO GET ALONG WITHOUT A PHONE —
JULY-18
OOPS- AND ELECTRIC LIGHTS TOO!!
ERNIE BUSHMILLER

May 22, 1934

THIS HOTEL CERTAINLY SERVES VERY NICE FOOD, NANCY!
YES - I MUST SAY THIS HASH IS VERY NICE!
OH-WOULD YOU CASH A CHECK PLEASE?
-ER-SO SORRY MISS RITZ-BUT I CAN'T TAKE A CHANCE ON A CHECK.
WHY NOT??- WE TOOK A CHANCE ON YOUR HASH'- DIDN'T WE?
JAN-11
-ERNIE BUSHMILLER-

January 11, 1936



The first appearance of Sluggo.

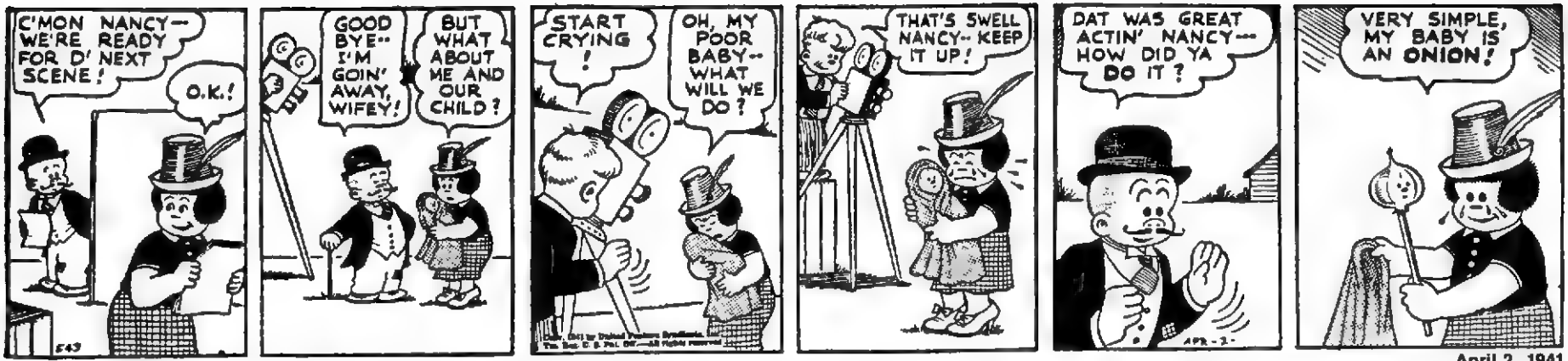
January 24, 1938

THEM KIDS IS SO MEAN-- I PLAY 'EM A NICE HARMONICA SOLO AND THEY DON'T EVEN APPLAUD!
AH-- THERE'S PEE-WEE BROWN-- HE'S ALWAYS NICE AN' POLITE!
WELL, PEE-WEE--- DON'T BE AFRAID TO USE YOUR HANDS---
ERNIE BUSHMILLER

August 26, 1939

Eat "BIFFO" IT'S GOOD FOR YOU!
DIS BOINS ME UP--- I'M FAMOUS AND NOBODY RECOGNIZES ME!
REAL KIDS LIKE "BIFFO" for BREAKFAST
LOOK--- THEY ALL WALK BY AND DON'T EVEN NOTICE ME!
REAL KIDS LIKE "BIFFO" for BREAKFAST
ERNIE BUSHMILLER

February 18, 1941


C'MON NANCY— WE'RE READY FOR D' NEXT SCENE!
O.K.!
GOOD BYE-- I'M GOIN' AWAY, WIFEY!
BUT WHAT ABOUT ME AND OUR CHILD?
START CRYING!
OH, MY POOR BABY-- WHAT WILL WE DO?
THAT'S SWELL NANCY-- KEEP IT UP!
DAT WAS GREAT ACTIN' NANCY— HOW DID YA DO IT?
VERY SIMPLE, MY BABY IS AN ONION!

April 2, 1941

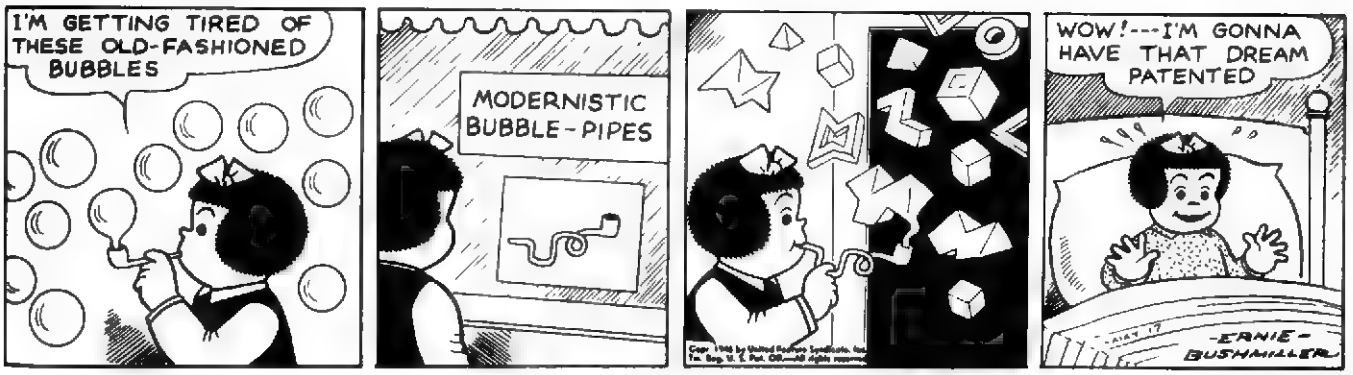
NANCY-- DON'TCHA THINK YA OUGHTA SHARE DAT LUCKY CHARM WIT' YER PALS?
BUT IT'S BAD LUCK IF I TAKE IT OFF MY NECK!
YOU DON'T HAVE TO— WE CAN ALL WEAR IT!
SEE?— NOW WE'LL ALL SHARE YOUR LUCK!
ERNIE BUSHMILLER

November 28, 1941

DO YOU REALLY LIKE HER, SLUGGO?
OH, I THINK SHE'S PEACHY!
I WONDER WHY HE LIKES HER SO MUCH!
I GUESS IT MUST BE THE WAY SHE WEARS HER HAIR!
LATER
?!?!

April 17, 1942

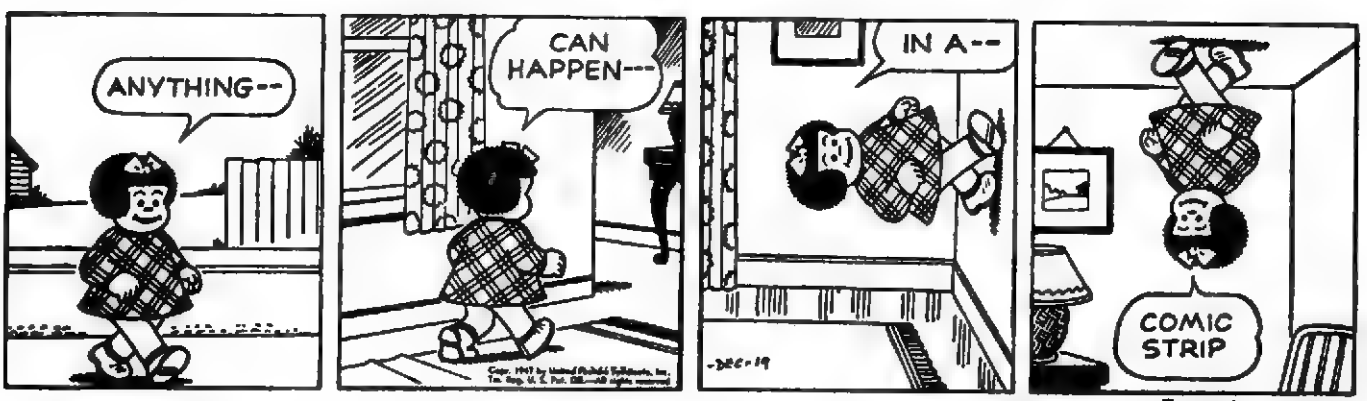
May 12, 1945



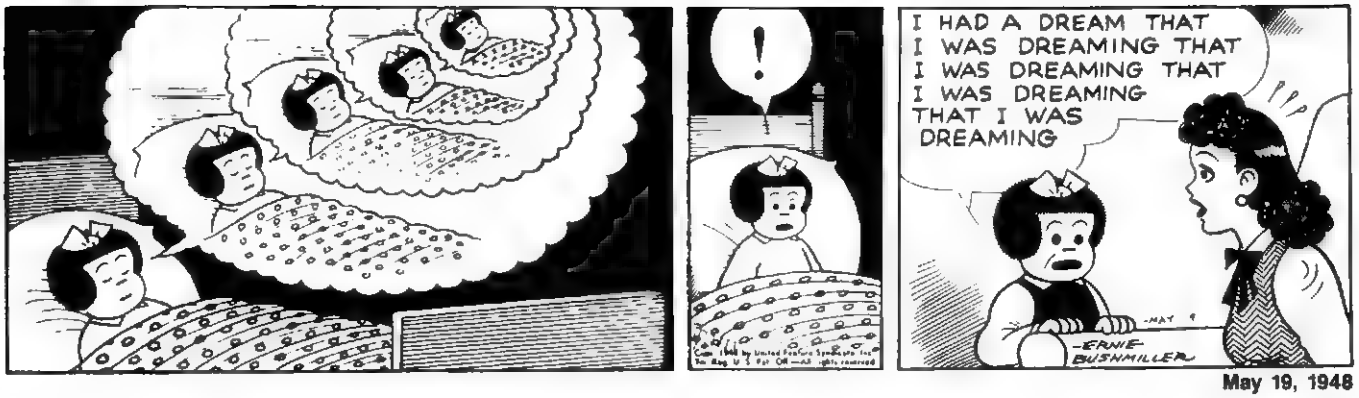
May 17, 1946

OH, BOY!---A PAIR OF SUN GLASSES
I SAW 'EM FOIST
LET GO- THEY'RE MINE
SOME NOIVE- GIMME 'EM
LISTEN --- WHAT'S THE USE OF US FIGHTING LIKE THIS ?
-ERNIE BUSHMILLER

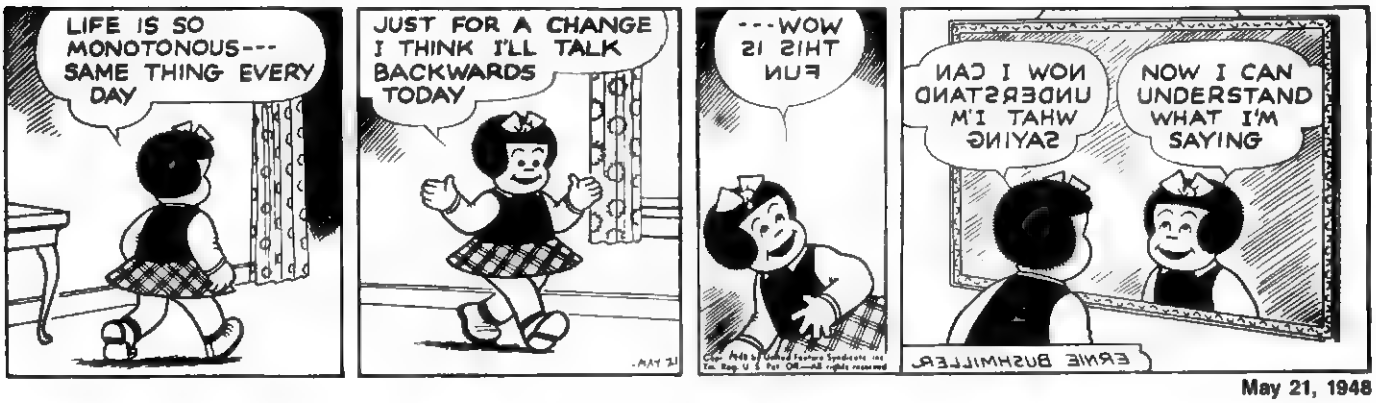
August 26, 1946



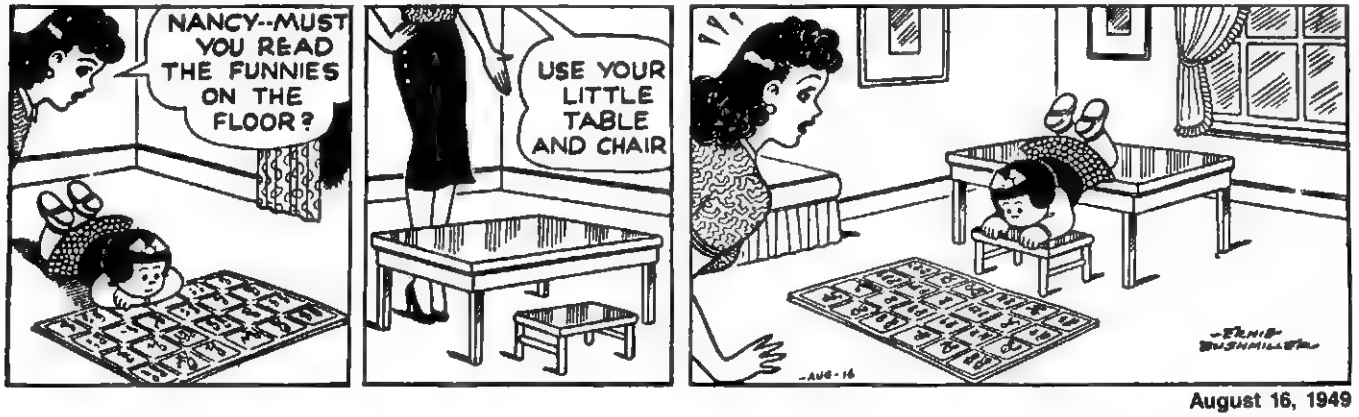
December 19, 1947



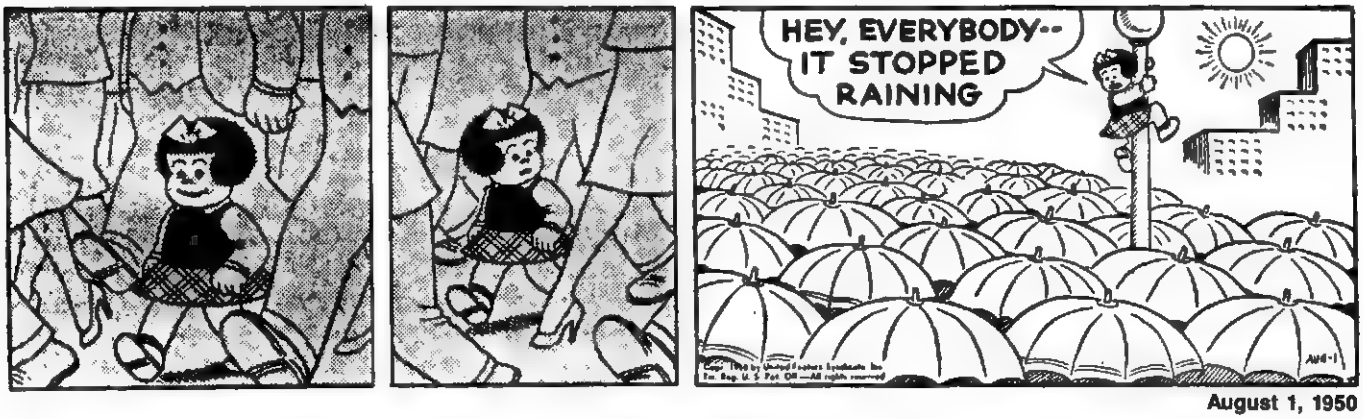
May 19, 1948


LIFE IS SO MONOTONOUS--- SAME THING EVERY DAY
JUST FOR A CHANGE I THINK I'LL TALK BACKWARDS TODAY
---WOW SI SIHT NUF
NOW I CAN UNDERSTAND WHAT I'M SAYING
NOW I CAN UNDERSTAND WHAT I'M SAYING
ERNIE BUSHMILLER

May 21, 1948



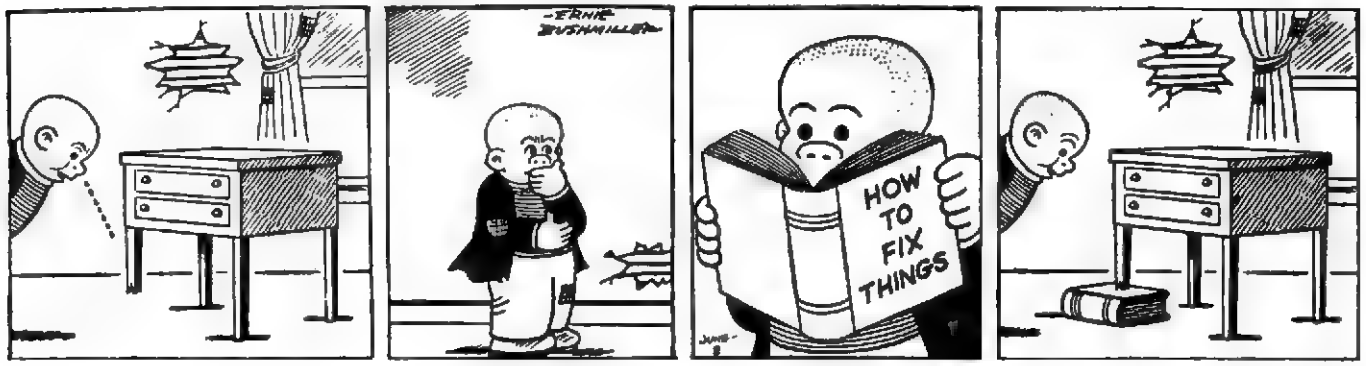
August 16, 1949



August 1, 1950

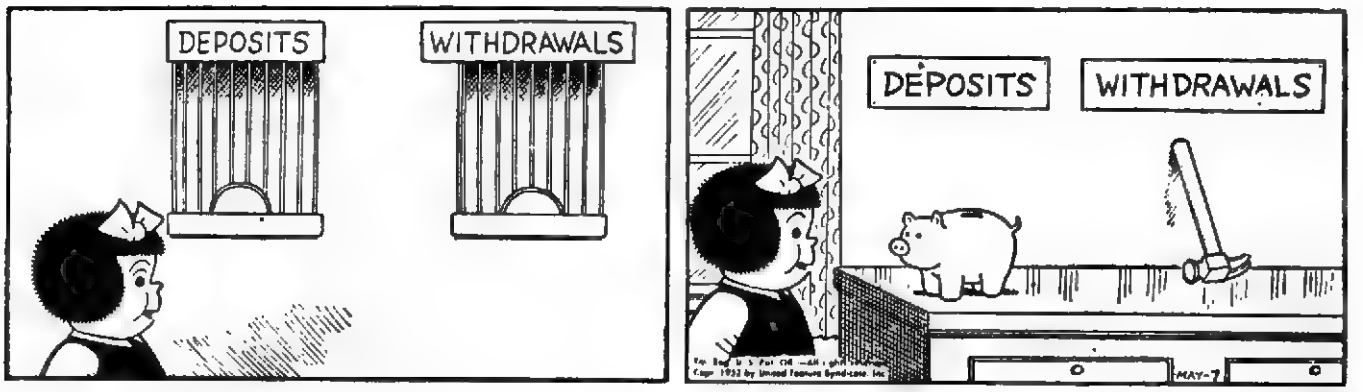
THIS SNOW IS GETTING DEEP-- LET'S SHOVEL IT
NAW
YOU'RE THE LAZIEST MAN IN THE WORLD
OH, NO, I'M NOT
WHO'S LAZIER THAN YOU?
THE GUY WHO DRAWS THIS
ERNIE BUSHMILLER

January 20, 1951



June 8, 1951

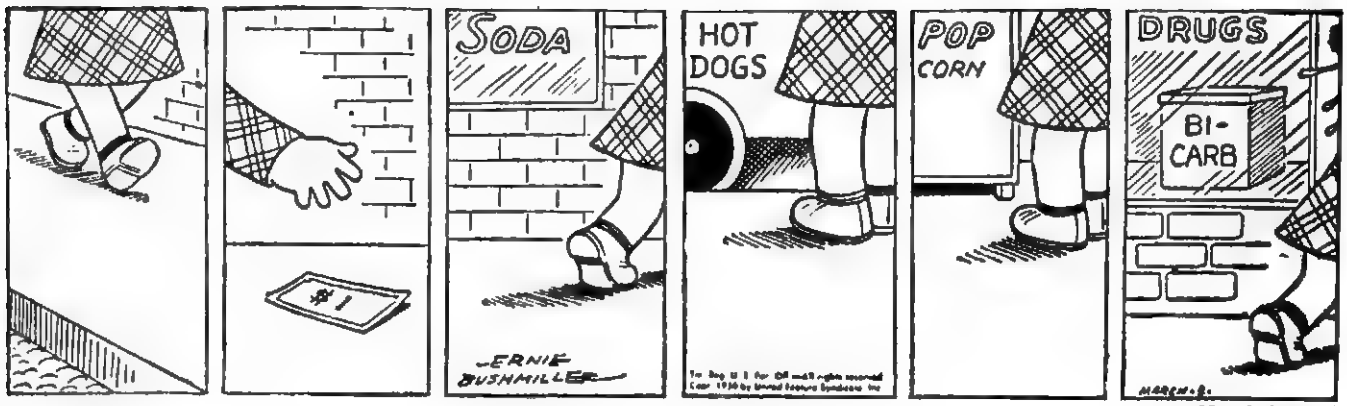
January 1, 1952



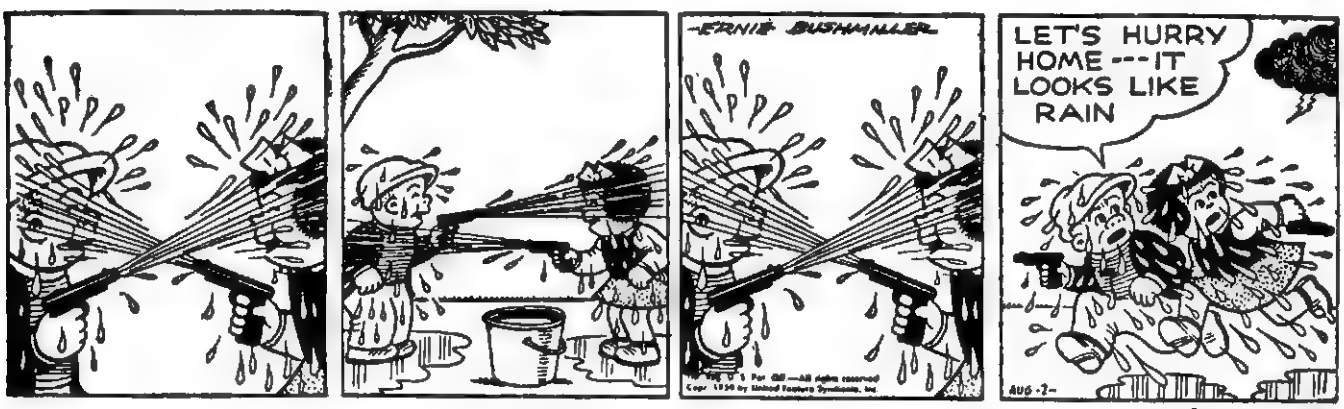
May 7, 1952

November 13, 1952

April 22, 1953

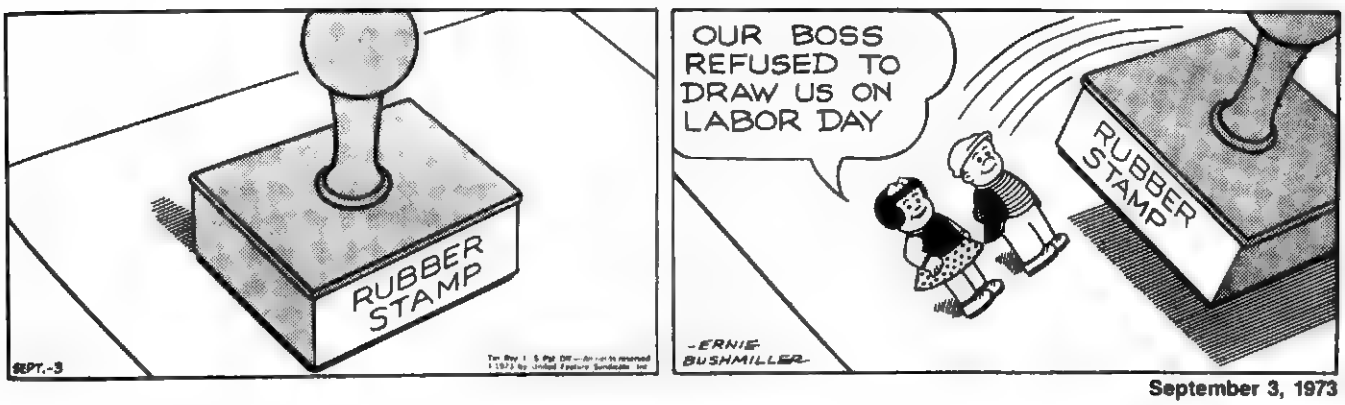


March 3, 1954



August 2, 1954

September 2, 1958



September 3, 1973

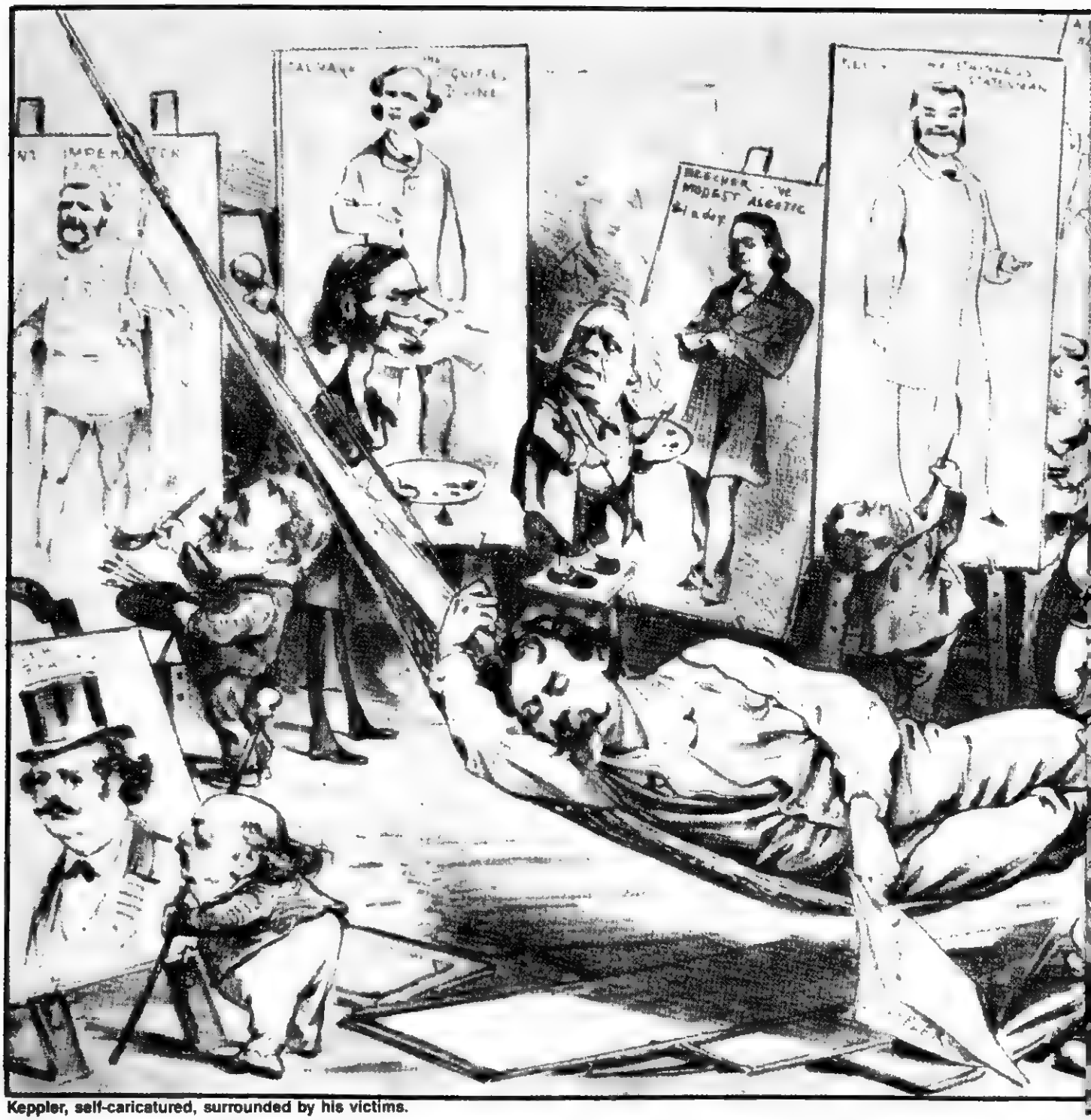
(continued from page 33)

he got up at the "crack of noon."

Thinking up ideas was a laborious process for Ernie as he described in the following account: "I start with a blank piece of drawing paper and just sweat and stew until I think of a subject that seems likely to produce a ludicrous situation. I jot down items such as toaster, leaky roof, folding-chair, mail box, windy day, etc... anything that comes to mind. Looking at the advertising in a magazine like *Life* also helps, or a Sears-Roebuck catalog. When I find an item that seems likely, I start to kick it around in my mind to see if I can work out a funny situation. If nothing jells after a reasonable time, I discard it and try another item. Sooner or later my mind warms up and I get the nucleus of an idea. I usually can visualize how the last panel will turn out, so I start to pencil in the finish of the strip very roughly. If it looks okay, I then work backwards toward the starting panels. I always work my strips in reverse. In this way I can choose the best path leading to the snapper."

Most of the punchlines in *Nancy* are visual, so the pictures need to be clearly readable to get the gag across. "I leave out all extraneous detail that may catch the eye and detract from the main point," Bushmiller explained. He went on to describe his unique philosophy of graphic layout: "I try to get some black into the object I am stressing if it is at all feasible. In a visual gag strip, clarity is more important than artistic effect. I think variety in the panels helps the appearance of a strip. Long shots, close-ups and medium shots attract the eye and are useful in putting your idea across. Composition is extremely important. By composition, I mean intelligent placing of your objects and characters so as to make it as easy as possible for your reader to get what you're driving at." **n**

A personal sketch Bushmiller made for his wife, Abby—the model for Fritzi Ritz in appearance and personality.



Keppler, self-caricatured, surrounded by his victims.

The Master of the Colored Po

JOSEPH KE
RIDING THE

tical Cartoon

PPLER CREST

Joseph Keppler, founder and chief cartoonist of Puck magazine, America's first successful cartoon weekly, dominated American political cartooning for nearly two decades, but he was at the very top of his form for only two of those years—1879 and 1880.

This is the story of those days of achievement.

Joseph Keppler was in an optimistic mood in the early days of 1879. He was rounding out his fortieth year and, had he chosen to, he could have spent considerable time ruminating over the losses he had suffered: a failed acting career, several businesses that went bust, his first two children dead in infancy, and his first wife, the beloved Minna, in her grave for just more than eight years.

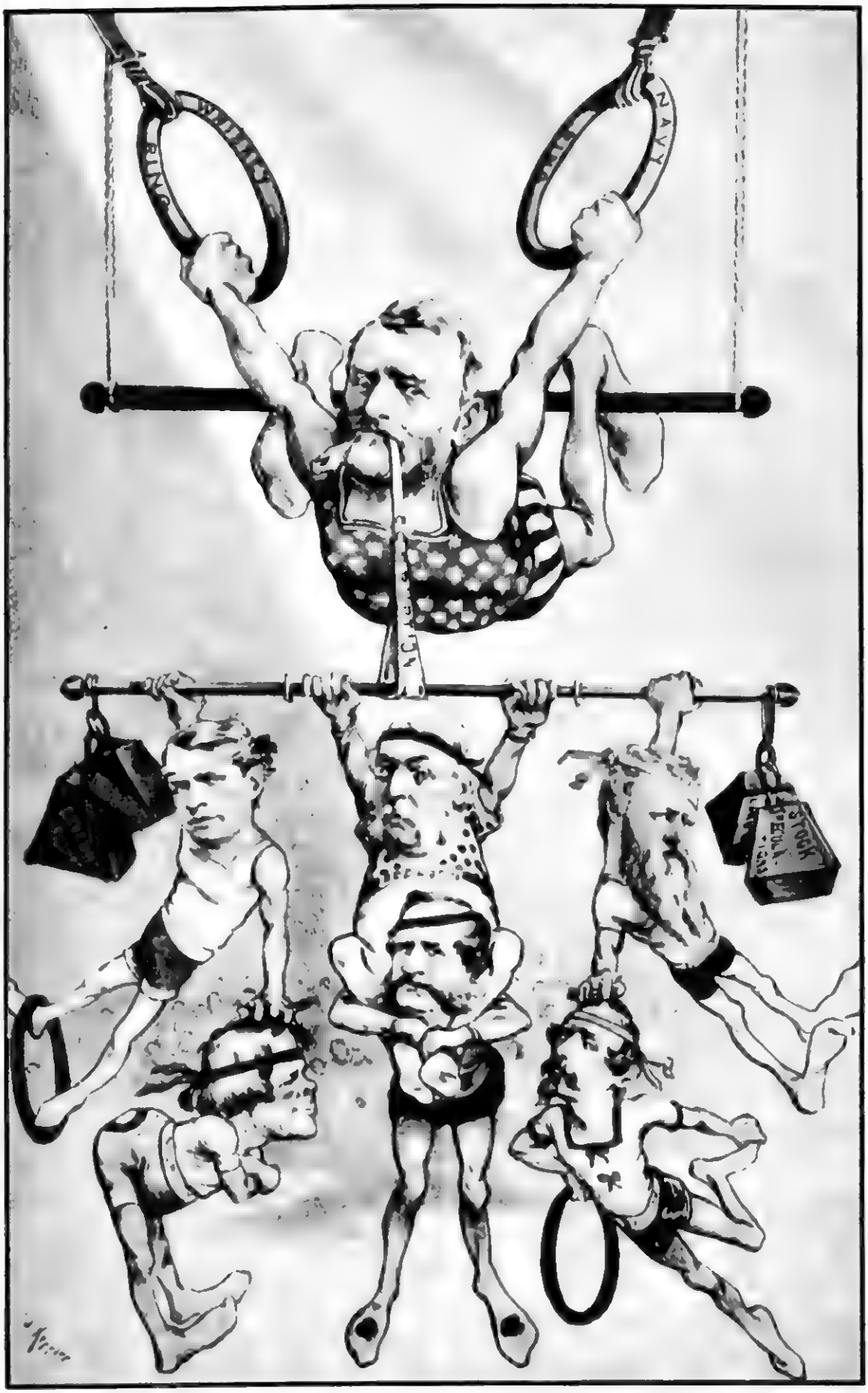
But Keppler had drunk his fill of self-pity. Only a fool savors defeat. Besides, life's disappointments have a tendency to crowd in on you if you give them berth. Better to accept what you couldn't control and move on. This wasn't to say that Keppler feigned optimism. He had good reason to be happy—more reason to be happy, perhaps, than at any other point in his life.

He had a sturdy marriage. His attractive, young wife Pauline, at 26, had already borne him two children. Udo, nearly seven, was his big boy. Keppler was proud of his son's sharp good looks—he had taken after his father. As for Udo's quiet and contemplative manner, that took some getting used to. He didn't have to be a ham like his old man, but Keppler didn't want his son to be afraid of the world either. He and Pauline had enrolled him in the German-American School of New York; they wanted their little American to venerate tradition. The family had just celebrated little Irma's fourth birthday. Joseph and Pualine planned another child; Olga would be born later in the year. More and more, Keppler's prattling cherub at home—with Irma's round little features and angelic, curling hair—resembled his professional child, the spirited mascot of his weekly humor magazine, *Puck*.

Life at the office was much improved over what it had been a year ago, when Adolph Schwarzmann and Sydney Rosenfeld spent too much of their time and energies arguing with one another. Keppler had liked Rosenfeld at first—even regarding him as a *Wunderkind* for all his youth and talent—but a man can only take so much of complaints. Did Rosenfeld think Keppler *liked* putting off creditors, *liked* looking at a balance sheet that never balanced? Well, Rosenfeld had vacated the editor's chair, and his replacement, H.C. Bunner, was doing a splendid job. Keppler liked the way Bunner's mind worked. He was witty, and clever, and, best of all, he laughed at Keppler's jokes.

Of course, nobody laughed like Schwarzmann laughed. Sometimes, Keppler thought Schwarzmann would have made a fine barkeep. He liked people, was a good listener, and was

by Richard Samuel West



PUCK WANTS "A STRONG MAN AT THE HEAD OF GOVERNMENT"—BUT NOT THIS KIND.

Then-president Hayes was criticized for not being "a strong man." This was Keppler's comment. (Feb., 1880)

ever vigilant with money. But then, Keppler would have been denied the best partner he had ever had. It was simple: Schwarzmann was a born manager. He knew about process and flow. He knew how to make a business run smoothly. Keppler was mighty glad he didn't have to worry about such things. He didn't want to ever repeat the experience he had in St. Louis, when his partner Fritz Herold died and then his brother-in-law Harry left town, leaving him with complete control over a feeble little weekly, his first *Puck*. He ran himself ragged for about a month. Then he sold the whole enterprise and vowed to avoid the strange science of management for the rest of his life.

Not that Keppler was averse to hard work. In the last two and a half years he had worked harder than at any time in his life, but it was work he knew how to do. He was putting out the most attractive weekly in the country, the two most attractive weeklies if you included the German edition of *Puck*. And he thought any objective observer would say he was drawing the best cartoons too. Thomas Nast of *Harper's Weekly* was so tiresome these days. Talk about someone stuck in the past! Tommy was two years younger than Keppler, but judging from their work you would have thought he was two *decades* older.

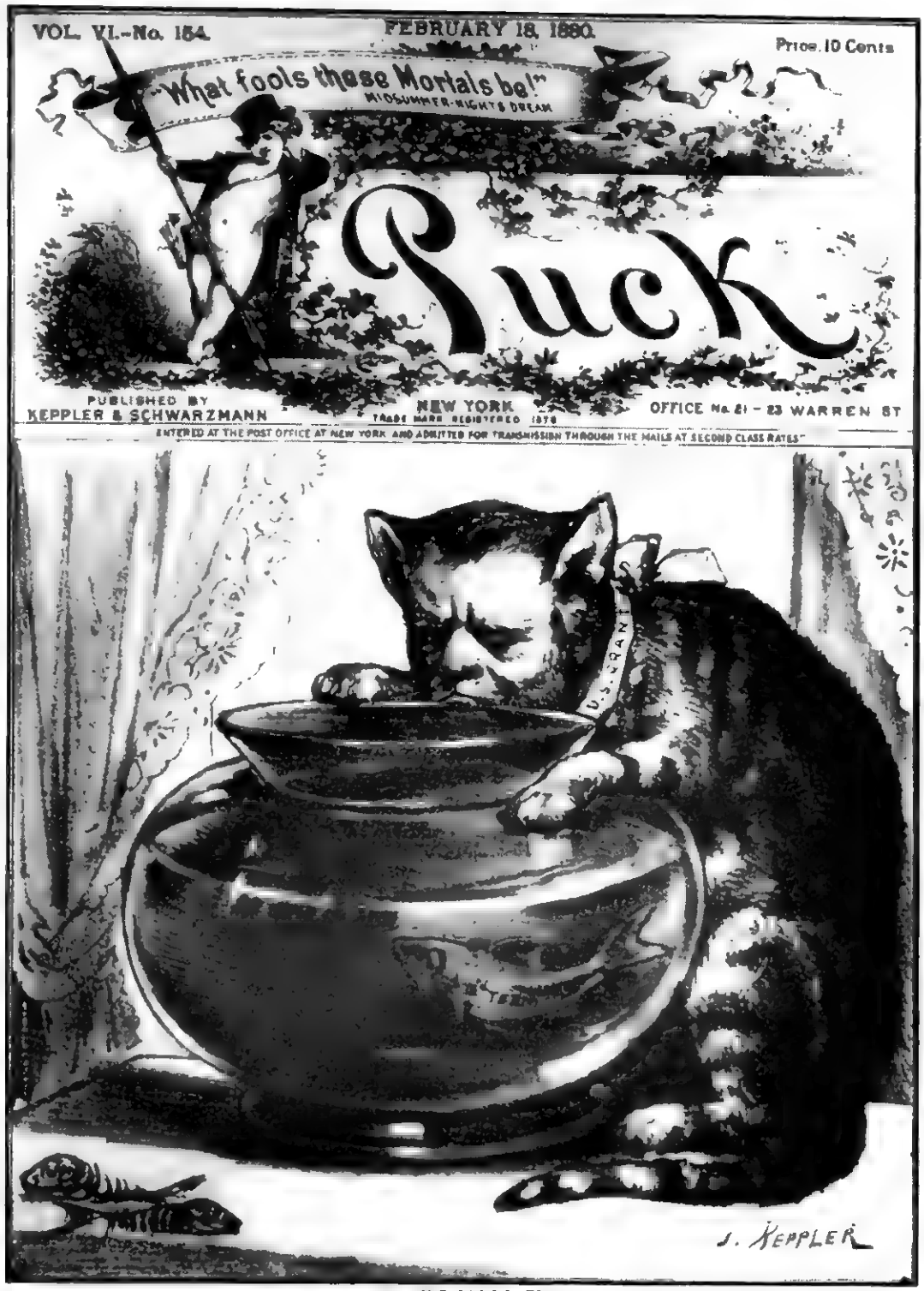
Nast simply had lost touch with the country's mood. He was determined to keep the causes of the Civil War alive: "Protect the rights of the freedmen;" "Down with the KKK." Even his art was angry, dominated by harsh black lines and severe cross-hatching.

Keppler didn't share Nast's black-and-white view of American politics. He refused to believe either side in a debate had a corner on the truth. Primarily a satirist, Keppler wanted to enlighten *and* to entertain. His lithographs were colorful, gentle-toned, and somehow soothing, even when his message was pointed. None of this was lost on his audience, which grew larger every week.

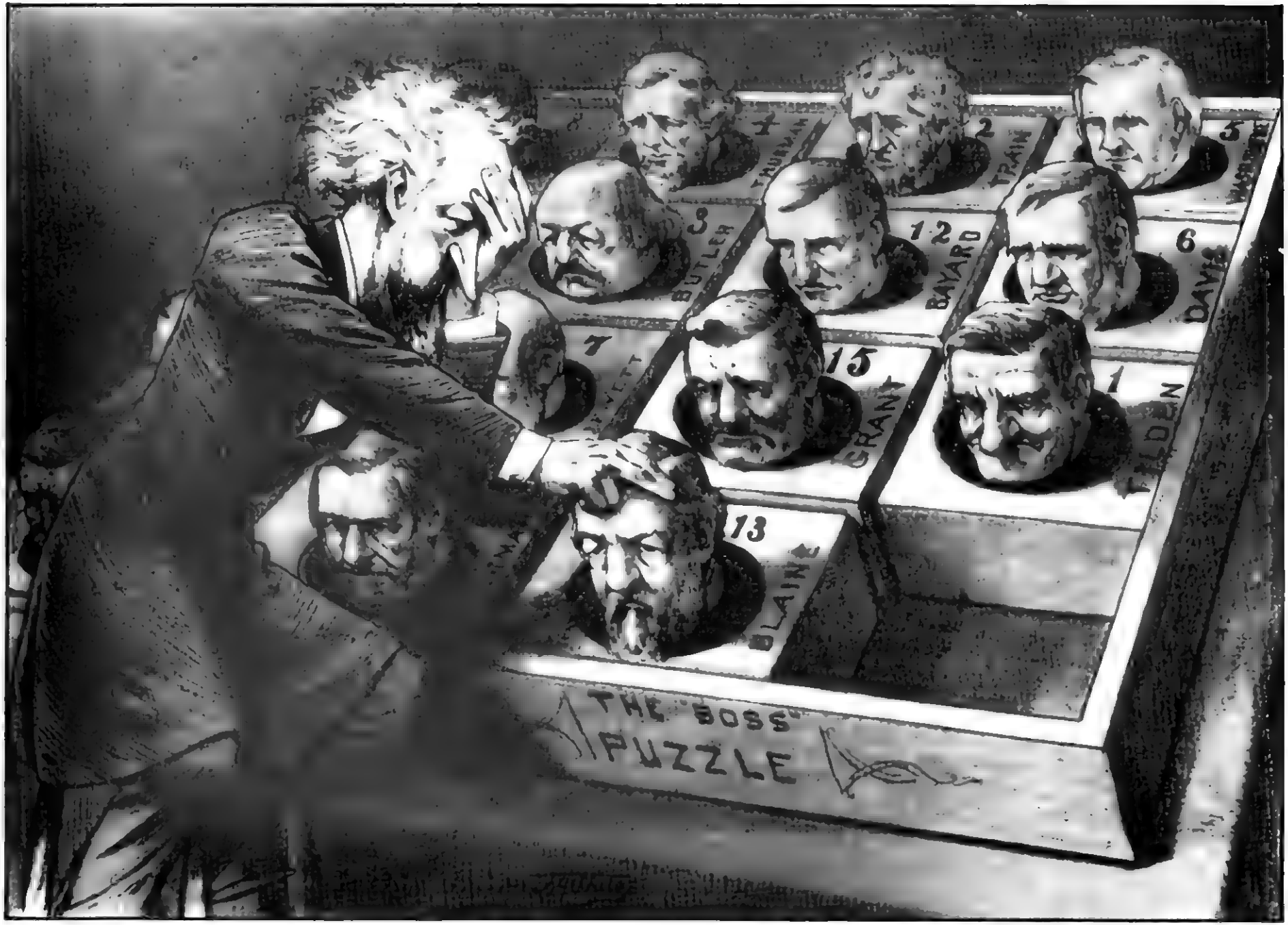
Keepler could practically reach out and touch the impending success that was to be his. This sunny prospect made him almost lightheaded. Perhaps he should talk to Pauline about having another child. After all, he would have more time for his family in the coming year. He and Adolph had decided to suspend their little weekly, *New Yorker Musik-Zeitung*, in April when they moved their firm into its new quarters, a three-story building at 21-23 Warren Street, next door to *Puck*'s lithographers, Mayer, Merkel and Ottmann. They reached this decision not without regret. Keppler was fond of the publication. It kept him in touch with his old love—the stage—with which he hadn't been seriously involved for nearly a decade. He had moments, just moments, of regret when he wondered what might have been had he remained an actor. The regret passed quickly, though, because he knew what the life of an actor was like. Applause was a wonderful thing, but you couldn't eat it.

Also, Jim Wales was going to begin working for them in just a few weeks. For months, Keppler had been cajoling Schwarzmann to let him hire another artist. By year's end, the German *Puck* was doing so well that Schwarzmann relented. Keppler knew all along who he wanted. Old Frank Leslie had

Keppler could use labels galore or streamline his cartoon imagery, as in this opening salvo against U.S. Grant's third-term bid. (Feb. 18, 1880)


VOL. VI.-No. 154.
FEBRUARY 18, 1880.
Price, 10 Cents
"What fools these Mortals be!"
MIDSUMMER-NIGHT'S DREAM
Puck
PUBLISHED BY
KEPPLER & SCHWARZMANN
NEW YORK
OFFICE No. 21 - 23 WARREN ST
ENTERED AT THE POST OFFICE AT NEW YORK AND ADMITTED FOR TRANSMISSION THROUGH THE MAILS AT SECOND CLASS RATES
U.S. GRANT
J. KEPPLER

WILL THE CAT DO IT?



15-14-13.—THE GREAT PRESIDENTIAL PUZZLE.

Grant's manager Conkling can see no way to move his man into place, in J.A. Wales's spoof of the puzzle that swept America in 1880. One of *Puck*'s most celebrated cartoons. (March 17, 1880)

hired J.A. Wales right off the boat from studying in Europe to replace Keppler, when Keppler and Schwarzmann had established *Puck* back in '76. Keppler had liked Wales' work. Sure, it was a bit wooden, but Wales was a hard-hitting cartoonist with a great eye for caricature. And, judging from what little time they had already spent together, he seemed ready, even anxious, to learn. As for Wales the person, Keppler didn't pretend to understand his young man from Ohio with his flat way of talking and melon-shaped head. He reminded Keppler of some big bird—stiff-necked, awkward, imperial-looking. That didn't matter, though. What *did* was Wales' trained eye and skilled hand.

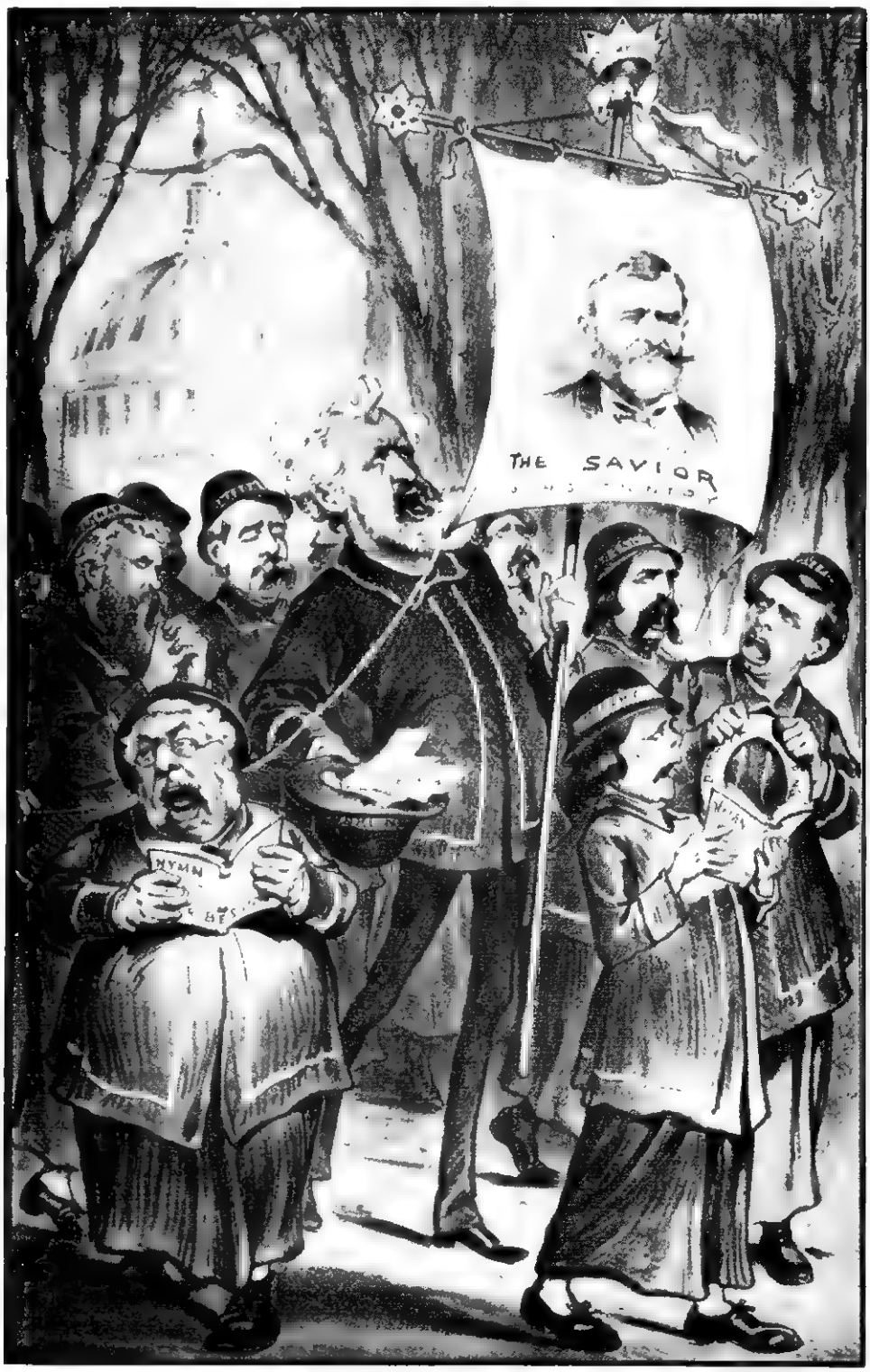
This winter Keppler was working two jobs:co-owner/art director/chief cartoonist of *Puck* and board member of the Leiderkranz Society. The Leiderkranz was a German-American fraternal organization that Keppler had joined soon after coming to New York six years before. Its major fundraiser was a pre-Lent carnival ball that Keppler never missed. For several years he had produced the elaborate, heavily illustrated program. This he did again in 1879. But he was also this year's choreographer, which required him to spend a good deal of his spare time trying to form a parade procession out of the graceless ranks of the Society's membership. When the big day came, the carnival proved a roaring success. Bunner wrote in appreciation of his colleague's work: "When we think that that Mr. Keppler was personally responsible for a couple hundred pairs of legs. . . , we cannot but admire the towering genius that drilled those naturally awkward legs into grace and precision, and made them a thing of beauty and a delight to the eye."

This personal triumph was but the first of many to come in the next two eventful years.

Keppler's high spirits found their way onto the pages of *Puck* in one witty, telling cartoon after another. The cartoons of 1879 showed Keppler at his best as a social critic. No person, no institution, no fad was safe from Keppler's withering glance. He excoriated the life-insurance industry for reneging on prompt payment of claims and for speculating on real estate with policyholders' money. In "Licensed to Murder," he indicted "respected" members of society who literally got away with murder, such as the saloon keeper who sold bad booze, the pharmacist who made fatal mistakes in filling prescriptions, and the sweatshop employer who worked his people to death.

He decried "Our Intelligent Jury System," depicting a judge saying to a a gentleman, "You read the paper! And have intelligent acquaintance with affairs of the day! Then how *dare* you come here as a juror?" When hotel owner Corbin restricted Jews from his Manhattan Beach resort, Keppler suggested that Jewish families might gain admittance by presenting themselves as musicians or by approaching the resort from the sea in a hot-air balloon. In "Marriage and Divorce," Keppler outlined two tales of unhappy marriage, one, for the man who could afford it, ending in divorce and freedom, and the other, for the man without money, ending in a lifetime of despair. "Our Costly Funerals" continued this anti-capitalist theme, showing

Grant supporter Conkling and others try to convert political disbelievers. (March 31, 1880)



THE POLITICAL "ARMY OF SALVATION."

THE WORSHIP OF THE GOLDEN CALF.

As Grant gained momentum, Keppler switched from ridicule to condemnation (April 21, 1880)

a widow left impoverished after the clergy, the undertaker, the florist and other merchants in death take advantage of her.

Religion was the one subject in 1879 that Keppler returned to repeatedly. In "The Religious Vanity Fair," Keppler drew an arcade of religious barkers all hawking the "true faith." While he invited readers to freely choose from among fools, he summed up *Puck*'s nonsectarian view of what constituted the best religion this way: "clean hands and a pure heart." Those were scarce commodities among religious leaders that year. Archbishop Purcell of Cincinnati lost all his diocese's money through bad investments. Connecticut's Rev. Hayden was brought up on charges of murdering another of his lover's male friends. The Reverends Hafermann and Trumblower, both of New Jersey, were charged with sexual indiscretions of a lesser sort. And the Reverends Henry Ward Beecher and Dewitt Talmage continued along their merry ways.

Both Beecher and Talmage had suffered Keppler's wrath for years, but in 1879 Keppler stepped up his attacks, devoting at least one cartoon every other week to skewering one or the other of these prominent religious leaders. Beecher, who led the Plymouth Church of Brooklyn, was a womanizer and a hypocrite, exhorting his parishioners to lead exemplary lives while he himself took advantage of impressionable women and lived in a style befitting a baron of business, not a man of the cloth.

Talmage, pastor of Brooklyn's Central Presbyterian Church, while not having Beecher's checkered past, had a propensity for showmanship and sensationalism that was just as offensive to Keppler. He harangued his parishioners with purple sermons and gestured gymnastically to bring his florid points home. Keppler usually pictured Talmage as two sets of flailing arms and legs, with a gigantic tongue at their center. Keppler showed Talmage "investigating" the evils of the cancan, the treatment of working girls, club life in Manhattan—any place that Talmage could then exploit in a sermon and contribute to his own self-aggrandizement.

Supporters of the two religious leaders regularly wrote complaining letters to *Puck*. Bunner adopted a defiant attitude, telling readers, "(W)e are not in the habit of replying to letters criticizing our course on the principles we uphold . . . Such communications are apt to get wastebasketed."

Keppler was equally defiant. In May, he drew his harshest attack on Beecher to date. The Reverend had traveled to Canada as chaplain of the 13th Brooklyn regiment to celebrate Queen Victoria's sixtieth birthday and to pay respects to Canada's new governor-general, the Scottish Marquis of Lorne. Keppler brutally satirized the trip, suggesting that Beecher behaved in a scandalous manner. Soon after the cartoon appeared, the regiment held an anti-Keppler protest meeting. True to its nature, *Puck*, in its next edition, lampooned the protest meeting too. Wrote Bunner, "Our devoted friends . . . prayed to us on bended knees, . . . (to) draw things just a little wee bit milder. But the prayers have been systematically ignored . . . (and now) *Puck* is to be wiped out of existence. Mr. Keppler is to be torn in pieces by wild horses, and then trampled into condensed meat by newly captured elephants."

The following month, Keppler turned the spotlight on Talmage, who was then on a preaching tour of England. In "Talmage Wins the Belt," Keppler responded to press reports that the Brooklyn preacher was winning tremendous ovations by depicting him being carried in triumph by a troupe of adoring women. In vignettes around this central image, Keppler showed Talmage in a braying contest with an ass, imitating the gymnastic effects of a store-window pull-toy, and receiving a money belt for his good work from John Bull.

Syd Rosenfeld, since leaving *Puck*, had established his own magazine, *The Rambler and Dramatic Weekly*. He reported to his readers that *Puck*'s anti-Beecher and Talmage cartoons had "aroused the indignation of the press throughout the country, and Keppler, the very clever cartoonist who prostitutes his skill in drawing them seems to be the particular object of censure." But knowing something of the operation of *Puck*, Rosenfeld wanted to correct what he considered a misconception. Though Keppler "is inclined to be vulgar where he might be witty," said Rosenfeld, "the downright filth that gets into his pictures is directly inspired by his partner, a little undergrown German typesetter named Schwartzmann (sic), who has made it his business since *Puck* began to find a market for obscenity . . . *Puck*'s artist is too clever to lend himself to such a disgraceful course of action. And as for his partner whom the plain Saxon words 'little beast' most fitly describe, a summer season in the penitentiary would bring him round."

Fortunatly for Keppler and Schwarzmann, Rosenfeld did not represent the majority view. Many Americans shared Keppler's contempt for those who abused privilege and power. They were thrilled by Keppler's boldness and they began coming back, week after week, for another dose. Sometime in the middle of the year, the English-language edition found itself with more readers than its robust German brother. From that time on *Puck* was more accurately an American magazine with a German-language edition, rather than the other way around. Perhaps the sign that *Puck* had arrived had actually come several months before when Keppler and Schwarzmann

Samuel Tilden—politically dead because of an 1876 vote buying-scheme. (May 12, 1880)

THE SKELETON IN THE DEMOCRATIC CLOSET.

POLITICAL CONVICTS.

Keppler pictured the dictatorial methods of U.S. Grant's political handlers—(l. to r.) Don Cameron of Pennsylvania, Roscoe Conkling of New York, and John Logan of Illinois—with Republican delegates. (May, 1880)

JUST THE DIFFERENCE.

Keppler celebrated the Democratic nominee, W.S. Hancock, but was cooler to the party itself. (July 28, 1880)

licensed the "Puck" name to a pipe-tobacco company, then a cigarette company, and finally a cigar company. The name "Puck" was becoming a part of the American landscape.

The magazine's growing success allowed Keppler at the end of the year to add yet another artist to his staff. Once again, he raided the ranks at *Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper*. When Wales had departed that paper, Leslie had promoted another young Ohioan on his staff, Frederick Burr Opper, to replace him.

As *Puck* outdistanced and outclassed Leslie's as a journal of opinion, Leslie chose to print fewer and fewer political cartoons. Consequently, Opper's work for the *Newspaper* consisted mainly of mild satiric cartoons to illustrate the back pages and to break up the advertising. When Leslie died on January 10, 1880, in the midst of financial troubles and publishing woes, Keppler and Schwarzmann took advantage of the turmoil to hire away the 23-year-old Opper.

Selecting Opper as *Puck*'s third cartoonist was an interesting choice. He had none of the experience of Keppler or Wales as a political cartoonist. Artistically, his work looked childish, charming perhaps, but definitely amateurish. Keppler, however, must have seen in Opper's work a comic spark, a certain light, that would complement his own political bent and Wales' humorlessness. Time proved him correct. Opper would become *Puck*'s greatest comic artist. As 1880 dawned, Puck, with its experienced editorial, business, and art staff, was now fully prepared to meet the challenge of the 1880 presidential race.

Keppler sounded the first note of the 1880 campaign more than a year before the two political parties were scheduled to meet in convention. In April 1879 he drew "The Candidates and Their Friends." In one half of the cartoon he showed the 1876 Democratic presidential candidate Samuel J. Tilden elbowing out several other Democrat contenders in an effort to possess the presidential chair. It is captioned, "The Democratic Candidate—He Would, and So Would They." In the other half of the cartoon, he pictured the Republicans kneeling to a reticent Grant. This half is captioned, "The Republican Candidate—They Would, But He—?" The cartoon only incidentally expressed Keppler's dislike for both men, but he was to make it *Puck*'s aim in the coming year to see that neither of them won the nomination of his party.

Despite Keppler's depiction of Tilden as grasping for the presidential chair, the aging Democrat had reason not to be interested in the 1880 Democratic Party nomination. His spotless reputation had taken quite a beating since 1876. That year and in the years that followed, the government made a public show out of investigating Tilden for tax evasion during the Civil War. Although the case lacked substance and was obviously politically motivated, it dragged on until 1882, when the government finally dropped it. In the meantime, Tilden's image suffered irreparable harm.

Then, after he had received praise for the selfless way he handled the 1876 election dispute (where the Republicans almost certainly schemed to defraud the Democrats of their popular-vote victory by rigging the Electoral College returns), Tilden sanctioned the work of the Potter Committee, a U.S. House-sponsored investigation into the fraud charges. In Keppler's opinion, the election issue was dead and reexamining it would only open a Pandora's box. Ironically, the investigation proved to be more damaging to Tilden than to anyone else. The "cipher telegrams" surfaced, implicating two of Tilden's lieutenants in a plot to purchase the votes of Louisiana and Florida electors. The affair was sufficiently shadowy that Tilden escaped charges of impropriety, but the sensational telegrams further diminished his public stock.

Partly because of these developments and partly because of his failing health, Tilden expressed little interest in renomination. But Keppler knew that Tilden's renunciation meant nothing until the convention completed its business and adjourned. Keppler feared that the financially strapped Democrats might turn to Tilden to gain access to his personal fortune. To ensure that that wouldn't happen, *Puck* waged a campaign against the man and his money.

While Wales drew most of *Puck*'s anti-Tilden cartoons, Keppler stepped in occasionally to lend a hand. His most striking anti-Tilden cartoon, entitled "The Skeleton in the Democratic Closet," showed office-seeking rats rummaging around a skeleton slumped in a money barrel. The skeleton, of course, is Tilden, pictured in an advanced state of decay.

Keppler was devoting much more of his time to anti-Grant

FORBIDDING THE BANNS.

THE BRIDE (Garfield):—"But it was such a little one!"

Presidential candidate James A. Garfield had gotten $329 out of the Credit Mobilier scandal, a "little one" that Keppler used in one of his most effective cartoons. (August 25, 1880)

THE DEMOCRATIC SAMSON AND THE REPUBLICAN PHILISTINES.

SAMSON IS ALL RIGHT AND THE JAWBONE IS ALL RIGHT BUT THE PHILISTINES HAVE JUST HEARD THE NEWS FROM VERMONT, AND THEY ARE ALL RIGHT, TOO.

Early returns show a Republican/Philistine win—thus their mirth at Samson/Hancok and the Democratic ass. (Sept. 15, 1880)

cartoons. Even though he had pictured Grant in the April 1879 cartoon showing little interest in the nomination, Keppler stayed on guard. Later that year, in September, he drew "Soothing 'Em to Sweet and Happy Slumber." The cartoon featured Grant in the presidential nursery gently cooling off the Republican aspirants for the nomination with a fan on which is printed " 'I have had all the honors . . . There are other men who have fairly earned the Presidency, and should have it. . . .' —U.S.G." Keppler lets his viewers judge Grant's sincerity by drawing the General with a wonderful smirk on his face.

Sure enough, the General's attitude soon changed. By the end of the year, he was not only interested in the nomination, he was the leading contender for it. Since leaving office in 1877 under dark clouds of scandal and mismanagement, he had taken a tour around the world. In every country he visited, he was welcomed and feted in a fashion befitting his military status. As Americans heard reports of how highly Grant was regarded abroad, they began to recall his military achievements with admiration and respect and seemed willing, once more, to forget his political bumblings. Grant's world tour had done much to restore his lustrous Civil War reputation.

Keppler issued an early warning against confusing Grant the General and Grant the President. In "*Puck*'s Advice Gratis to Some Editorial Shriekers for Grant," Keppler drew a downtrodden Grant dogged by his corrupt cronies, who are pictured as a pack of mongrels. They walk in the shadow of a statue of Grant which portrays him in all his military glory. Keppler captioned the cartoon: "Don't Forget your 'Man on Horseback' But your Man on Foot Has Too Many Curs at his Heels." Suggesting that Grant was unfit for office because of his friends was Keppler's gentlest jab at the General.

As the political situation heated up and Grant's prospects for the nomination continued to improve, Keppler took his gloves off. The subsequent series of cartoons is one of the most sustained and imaginative graphic arguments in cartoon history.

Keppler's orchestrated attack on the Grant candidacy began with the February 4, 1880 issue. In the brightly colored centerspread, Keppler drew Grant as a trapeze artist, straining to suspend a motley assortment of corrupt cronies from a strap clenched in his teeth. It was captioned, "*Puck* Wants a Strong Man at the Head of Government—But Not This Kind!"

The March winds brought "An Unexpected Blow." This cartoon showed Grant lieutenant Roscoe Conkling and his Senate colleague Don Cameron trying to fly the Grant third-term kite. Their efforts are stymied by the lightning strike of an independent press and the swift gale of public opinion.

Next came Keppler's "The Political Salvation Army," which showed the pious Conkling and friends raising their voices in song and collecting votes for "The Savior of his country," U.S. Grant.

In "The Worship of the Golden Calf," Keppler pictured Grant as a sacred cow (made luminous by printed gold ink) mounted on a pedestal. Conkling and other politicians dance and pray at its base. Puck as Moses is coming down the mountain holding a tablet containing the Ten Commandments, all of which say, "Thou shalt not covet a third term."

In "The Modern Wandering Jew," Keppler depicted a harried Grant being driven throughout the world by "selfish friends" ever-poised to take advantage of his war record for their own gain. Keppler's beautiful use of color in this cartoon makes the reader feel the damp and chilly place to which Grant has been exiled.

Wales contributed a few strong cartoons to the campaign as well. His "15-14-13 Puzzle" was based on a fad of the day that required the player to maneuver interlocking blocks into numerical order. Wales' cartoon showed a perplexed Conkling trying without success to move Grant into the winning slot. In May, Wales replied with graphic sarcasm to a newspaper statement that charged President Rutherford B. Hayes with having a weak Southern policy where Grant's had been strong. In one half of the cartoon he drew Grant's "strong policy"—a triumphant General being carried in a carpet bag, supported by bayonets, on the back of a broken South. In the other half, he drew Hayes' "weak policy"—the current Chief Executive plowing under Grant's destructive programs and heralding in a new Southern prosperity.

Increasingly, the cartoons in *Puck* were sparkling political conversations. The *Boston Evening Transcript* reacted to

THE CINDERELLA OF THE REPUBLICAN PARTY AND HER HAUGHTY SISTERS.

Keppler thought that President Hayes didn't get enough credit for his administration's good work. Combined with his dislike of Grant, that produced this new version of the fairy tale (Oct. 13, 1880)

Keppler's "Worship of the Golden Calf" with this bit of doggerel:
Have you seen the big picture in Puck,
Where, high on a pedestal, stuck,
The Grant golden calf—
A sublime half-and-half—
Receives bended knee and head-duck?. . .

Let these worshippers think what they do!
Their folly they'll certainly rue,
When early next fall,
With Grant, one and all,
They shall form a salt river crew.

The *Brooklyn Times* was particularly struck by the way *Harper's Weekly*, previously the dominant voice in presidential campaigns, seemed drowned out in 1880. Its editor suggested: "*Harper's Weekly* ought to engage for the campaign the services of Keppler, whose political cartoons have already given *Puck* the leading place as a popular and humorous pictorial journal."

Keppler was anxious to play as large a role in the election as possible. To that end, he became an American citizen in May, enabling him to cast his first vote in November.

As the Republican convention approached, Grant appeared certain to get the nomination, despite Keppler's strong work. "To the Chicago Convention" showed Grant's locomotive, engineered by Conkling, getting the "all clear" signal from Grant supporters to proceed to the convention. The figure of Puck, *Harper's Weekly* editor G.W. Curtis, and Republican liberal Carl Schurz, pictured in the background, stand mourning over the body of a young damsel representing the Republican Party, run over by the Grant locomotive in its headlong dash for the nomination. Keppler's last cartoon before the convention showed manacled and chained "Political Convicts" being herded into the meeting hall by the whip-wielding Conkling and Gen. John Logan, another Grant leader.

For the cover of the June 9th issue, which would appear after the convention adjourned but had to be ready for the printer a few days before the convention convened, Keppler daringly predicted Grant's defeat. "The Chicago Catastrophe" showed Conkling, Logan, and Cameron limping away from the twisted wreckage of their third-term train. Luckily for *Puck*, the prediction proved correct.

Keppler capped his anti-Grant series with "The Appomattox of the Third Termers," which showed a defeated Grant surrendering his battle sword to the Republican nominee, James A. Garfield. Linking Grant's military victory in 1865 with his political defeat in 1880 was a merciless masterstroke, upsetting many who considered the surrender at Appomattox a sacred event.

As delighted as he was by Grant's defeat, Keppler could not work up much enthusiasm for the ticket the Republicans ended up nominating. Presidential candidate Garfield had first come to Keppler's attention in the Credit Mobilier scandal in Congress in 1872. While Garfield neither accepted nor refused the railroad stock that had been surreptitiously assigned to him, he did profit from the affair to the paltry tune of $329. The vice-presidential nominee was the obscure political hack Chester A. Arthur, late of the New York Customs House, his nomination a bone thrown to the defeated Grant-Conkling forces. While the Republicans could have done worse, *Puck* decided that they had fielded a decidedly weak ticket. The question, of course, remained: What would the Democrats do?

Tilden was still a prime contender for the nomination. If he was given that plum, *Puck* would probably be inclined to support the Republican ticket, sullied though it was. But the Democrats ended up nominating Civil War general Winfield Scott Hancock. Bunner was gleeful. He wrote, "The Democratic convention, true to its tradition, has blundered even in its efforts to blunder and has set before the country what no one can deny is a strong ticket—the strongest ticket the Democratic party has made up in 20 years.

This dismissive compliment accurately reflected Keppler's attitude toward both political parties. The Republicans may have had to bear the burden of Grant's ineptitude in office, but the Democrats, dominated by Southerners, had to contend

Keppler had to produce a cartoon before he knew the outcome of the election, so he created this puzzle. (Nov. 3, 1880)

(Garfield's face is by the brunette's right foot, Hancock's at top center.)

LET US HAVE PEACE, NOW A PRESIDENT'S ELECTED.
Chorus of Invisibles—But **Where** are his features to be detected?

THE WAKE OVER THE REMAINS OF THE DEMOCRATIC PARTY.

At the funeral, the two dancers are (left) Tammany Chief Kelly and (right) Massachusetts Congressman Butler, both of whom had spoiled the Democrats' chances. (Nov. 10, 1880)

with the stain of secession and Civil War on their record. In "Inspecting The Democratic Curiosity Shop," Keppler showed Hancock being given a tour of effects from the Democratic party's checkered past. One museum case holds the robes of Ku Klux Klan members. Another holds the pistol Booth used to assassinate Lincoln. A whipping post for errant slaves and a stuffed slave-tracking bloodhound are also on display. The centerpiece to the exhibit, the Democratic donkey, "stuffed in 1860," consists of just two hind quarters labeled "North" and "South," sewn together with stitches of "secession sympathy." Hancock, taken aback, says, "Great Scott! Am I To Be the Head of That?"

Puck was especially pleased with Hancock because of what it called his "spotless record." Keppler cartooned Republican editors frantically searching for anything negative they could find about the General. But *Puck* learned soon enough that the reason Hancock's record was so spotless was that he had no political experience whatsoever, something of a liability in a race for the presidency.

The novice politico immediately encountered problems with a disorganized and divided Democrat party. Keppler pictured Hancock wrestling with the challenge of reconciling solid Southern support with Northern interests. The issue that caused the Democrats the most problems was the tariff. The industrial North had imposed a high tariff on foreign goods when the South had walked out of Congress during the Civil War. The South, which depended on foreign trade to keep its agricultural economy going, lobbied hard for lower duties. Hancock, caught unprepared, stated that he was not going to concern himself with the tariff question because it was a "local issue." In one sense, Hancock was right—the tariff was an amalgam of local interests. But the press howled and those who doubted Hancock's political knowledge took the statement as confirmation that he indeed knew little. *Puck* downplayed the *faux pas* and Keppler never commented on it, but the damage was done.

Adding to Hancock's travails was the incredible demand several Southern leaders were making for reparations from the North for the damage it had caused in the South during the war. The Republicans even spread the rumor that if Hancock were elected he would pay the claims. Hancock made short work of that bit of idiocy. Keppler pictured him manning a double-barrel cannon blasting away at the Southern claimants and the Republican rumormongers.

Keppler's support for the Democratic candidate was light-handed. If the issue clearly favored Hancock, Keppler came to his defense. If the issue meant little to Hancock's campaign, Keppler felt free to chide him about it. And if the issue reflected poorly on Hancock, Keppler ignored it. In contrast, he had nothing but criticism for Garfield. Like most of the Democratic press in 1880, Keppler made much of the Credit Mobilier scandal and the $329 Garfield had gotten out of it. This issue served as the impetus for one of Keppler's most effective cartoons, "Forbidding the Banns."

In that cartoon, he pictured Garfield as a bride at the altar with her intended, Uncle Sam. The ceremony, however, is interrupted at the fateful moment by Democratic Chairman W.H. Barnum, who runs into the room carrying a wailing baby labeled "$329, Credit Mobilier." Uncle Sam, confronted with the child, is aghast and asks his bride for an explanation. The coy Garfield explains, "but it was such a little one." Keppler's decision to equate Garfield's modest political indiscretion with a monumental social one—bearing a child out of wedlock—was a shocking masterstroke. It made the cartoon the hit of the campaign.

President Hayes received gentle notices in *Puck*'s pages as his administration came to a close. Keppler lauded him for his firm leadership and consoled him when Republican party leaders ignored his accomplishments. In "The Cinderella of the Republican Party," Keppler pictured Hayes, surrounded by the fruits of four years' productive labor, suffering in silence as his two haughty sisters, Grant and Conkling, make off for the Republican ball.

Early voting in Indiana and Vermont indicated a Republican victory in November. Keppler responded to the news by portraying Hancock as Samson, sure of himself in the face of possible defeat. In another cartoon, Keppler drew Hancock/Samson driving off his enemies by denying their intimations that he was willing to ally himself with the Greenback party to win the presidency. After Garfield won, Keppler concluded the series appropriately enough showing Hancock/Samson being shorn of his locks—and strength—by the Republican Delilah.

Since Keppler needed a week to draw, and another week to print, the cartoons in *Puck*, he had to anticipate events if he wanted his cartoons to be current when they appeared. Predicting election results, however, was a risky proposition. Still, the magazine couldn't neglect dealing with such a big story. In late October, with many days to go before the election but with little time left before the deadline, Keppler found a solution to the dilemma: the puzzle cartoon. Entitled "Let Us Have Peace, Now A President's Elected—But Where Are His Features To Be Detected?", the cartoon showed the Republican and Democrat parties in a bucolic setting reaching out to clasp hands. Hidden in the surrounding trees and rocks are the visages of the two presidential candidates and other party leaders. This may have made for a weak cartoon but it was sound publishing. When management found itself in similar binds in the future, it didn't hesitate to trot out this handy device.

Keppler saw the election as a critical referendum for the Democrat party. In "Positively the Last Awakening of the Democratic Rip Van Winkle," he pictured the Democratic party as the ragged mountain man with a broken rifle labeled "States' Rights" and a bottle of bourbon at his side. Bourbon recalled the French Bourbons who, like Southern Democrats, said Bunner, "never learned anything and never forgot anything." The ghosts of 20 years' worth of Democrat candidates appear before Van Winkle's eyes and threaten to abandon him on his lonely mountain top. Van Winkle cries out to them: "Don't leave me here for another twenty years!"

When Hancock lost, Keppler drew "The Wake over the Remains of the Democratic Party." In that cartoon, he pictured the Democrat party laid out on a table with a sheet drawn over its head. The party leaders console themselves with drink. Most are in a stuporous state. Only Tammany chieftain John Kelly and Massachusetts renegade Benjamin Butler—who, for personal reasons, were both happy to see the 1880 ticket defeated—are animated; they dance an Irish jig around the remains.

In the 1880 campaign, Keppler had lost the decisive battle—electing Hancock—but had won a war. Week after week, his work in *Puck* testified to his imagination, political insight, draftsmanship, and sense of color and composition. During the year, his star ascended at a breathtaking rate, crossing the path of Nast's descending star.

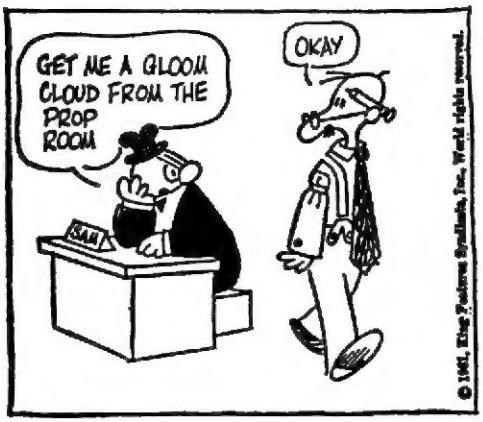
The year before, at summer's end, he and Wales had collaborated on a cartoon entitled, "*Puck*'s Picnic," which depicted politicians and personalities of the day at the beach on holiday. Off to one side is the *Puck* staff, waist high in the ocean. Keppler, surrounded by his colleagues, pictured himself effortlessly lifting Nast over his head. By the end of 1880, that victorious vision had been realized. Now Keppler was widely regarded as America's premier cartoonist.

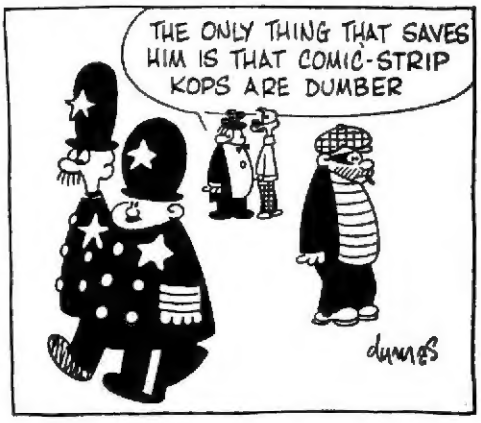
Success is never an unmitigated blessing. *Puck*'s success stirred up jealousy among the staff. Not long after the campaign ended, Jim Wales left *Puck* to start his own magazine; with money from publisher Frank Tousey and help from the pens of comic writer George "Bricktop" Small and artists Livingston Hopkins, Thomas Worth, and Michael Angelo Woolf, Wales published the first issue of *The Judge* on October 29, 1881. Thus did Keppler lose his first disciple. But Wales paid his mentor the greatest compliment possible by creating a publication that, except for its nameplate, was a duplicate of Keppler's *Puck*.

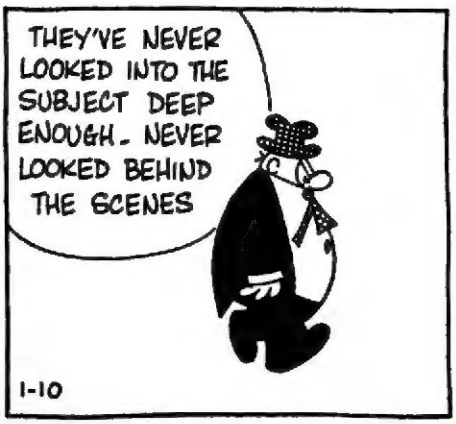
Actually, *The Judge* was not the first *Puck* imitator, nor would it be the last. After 1880, *Puck*, not *Punch*, became the model for American humor magazines. In the next 20 years, *Puck* look-alikes appeared in almost every large city in the country. The central feature of all these magazines, of course, was their color cartoons. The strength, grace, and visual appeal of Keppler's work was responsible for popularizing color lithography as *the* medium for the political cartoonist of the eighties. Joseph Keppler could know no greater tribute. ■

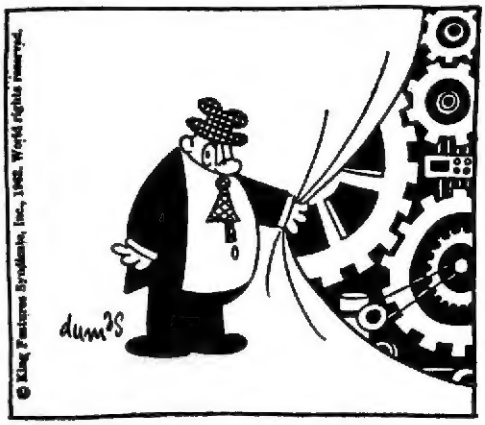
SAM'S STRIP RETURNS!

by Mort Walker and Jerry Dumas









HELLO, SAM
I'LL BE DARNED! A TALKING BEETLE!
DID YOU KNOW THERE WAS A COMIC STRIP NAMED AFTER YOU?
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1-12
YOU MEAN THERE'S A COMIC STRIP NAMED GREGORY?
dumas
SOMEONE WANTS TO KNOW WHAT KIND OF PANTS YOU WEAR
THESE ARE COMIC-STRIP PANTS
AND SOMEONE ELSE ASKED WHAT KIND OF CAR THIS IS
THIS IS A COMIC-STRIP CAR
3
1-30
AND THESE ARE COMIC-STRIP HATS AND HERE'S A COMIC-STRIP NOSE...
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dumas
AND HERE'S A COMIC-STRIP ENDING!
BEING OUT OF WORK SINCE 1933 IS BOUND TO AFFECT A GUY
I KNOW
NOT ONLY THAT, BUT ALMOST EVERYONE IN THE COUNTRY REJECTED HIM
I KNOW
BUT SOMEHOW I DIDN'T EXPECT IT OF HIM!
XXXX
PROHIBITION
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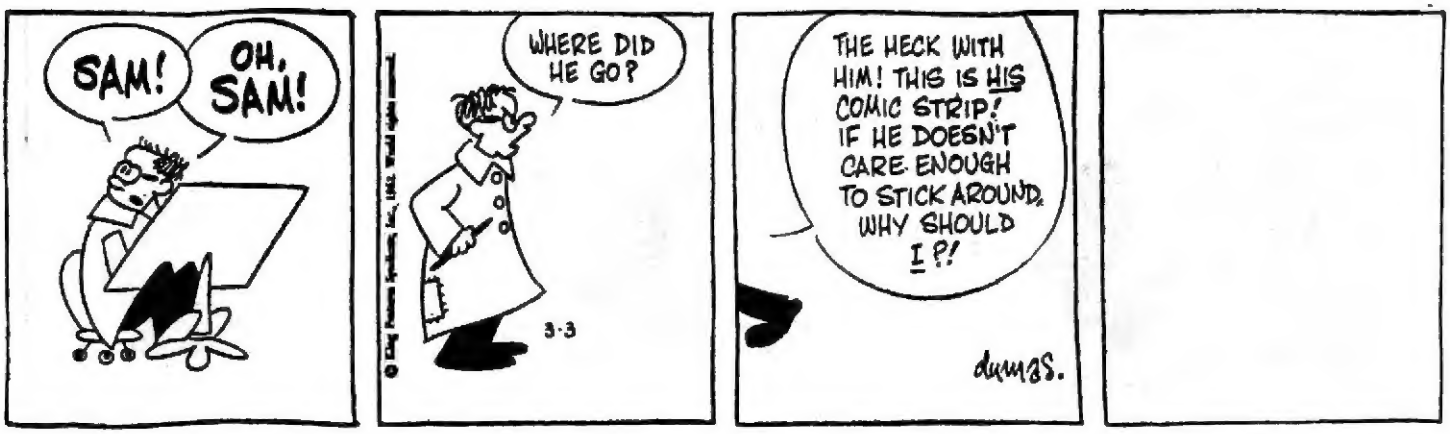
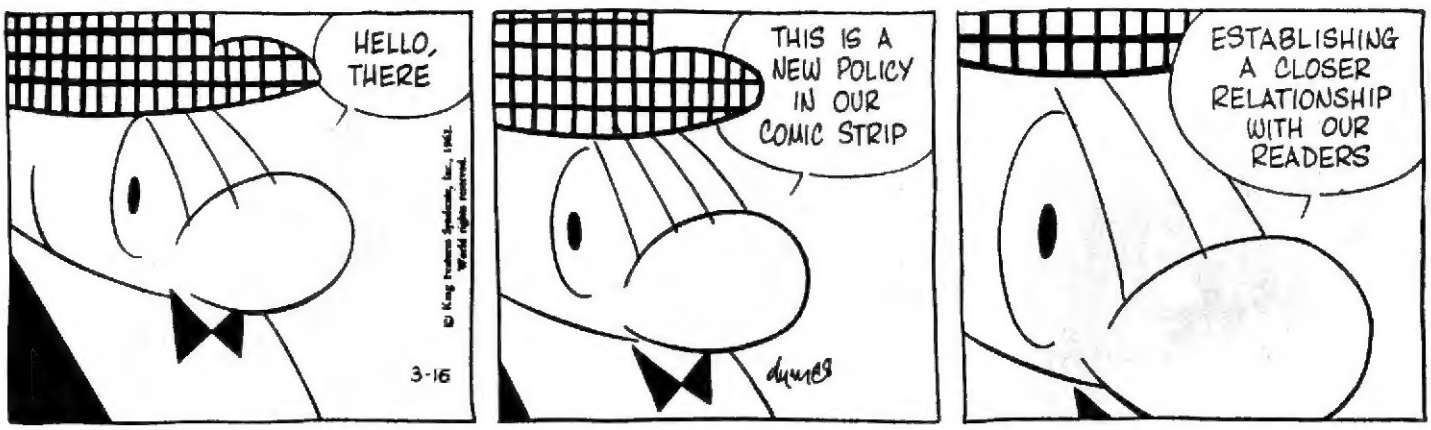
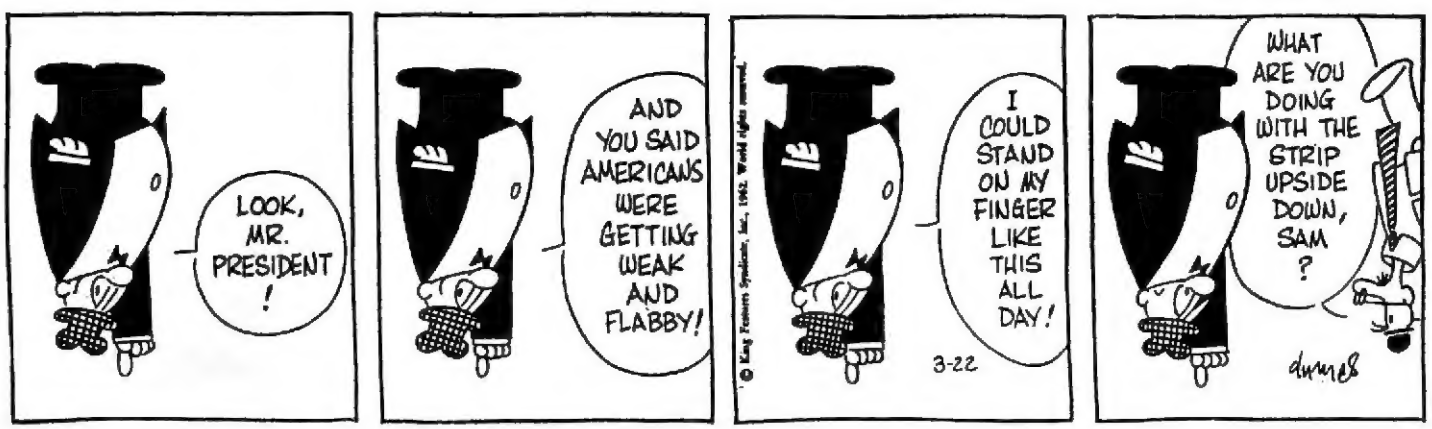
1-31
dumas
SOMETHING TO INTRIGUE MY READERS! WHET THEIR CURIOSITY!
SIPLO
HEE-HEE! THEY'LL ALL WRITE IN AND ASK WHAT IT MEANS! HEE-HEE!
SIPLO
AH! HERE'S THE FIRST LETTER
© King Features Syndicate, Inc., 1962. World rights reserved.
2-27
Sam! Stop using my name in your comic strip or I'll clobber you!
Ernest Siplo
dumas


SAM!
OH, SAM!
WHERE DID HE GO?
3-3
THE HECK WITH HIM! THIS IS HIS COMIC STRIP! IF HE DOESN'T CARE ENOUGH TO STICK AROUND, WHY SHOULD I?!
dumas.

WHY DO YOU TRY TO ACT LIKE SUCH A BIG SHOT?
I JUST GET CARRIED AWAY WHEN I'M TALKING TO PEOPLE
YOU SHOULDA HEARD YOURSELF! "ALL OF YOU DROP BY FOR A SWIM IN MY POOL"
I'LL HAVE TO BLUFF THROUGH SOMEHOW
3-7
WATER POLO, ANYONE?
dumas


HELLO, THERE
3-16
THIS IS A NEW POLICY IN OUR COMIC STRIP
dumas
ESTABLISHING A CLOSER RELATIONSHIP WITH OUR READERS


LOOK, MR. PRESIDENT!
AND YOU SAID AMERICANS WERE GETTING WEAK AND FLABBY!
I COULD STAND ON MY FINGER LIKE THIS ALL DAY!
3-22
WHAT ARE YOU DOING WITH THE STRIP UPSIDE DOWN, SAM?
dumas

I THOUGHT YOU WENT HOME
YEAH. HAD A BIG ARGUMENT WITH MY WIFE

CAN I SLEEP OVER HERE TONIGHT?
WELL.. I'M A LITTLE SHORT ON SUPPLIES

DON'T WORRY. I BROUGHT MY OWN LOG.
dumas 4-21

HI, SAM
WELL, IF IT ISN'T 1962. YOU WERE JUST A BABY A FEW MONTHS AGO

YEAH, YOU AGE FAST IN THIS BUSINESS
4-27

AT THIS RATE I'LL BE AN OLD MAN BEFORE THE YEAR IS OUT
dumas

INTERNATIONAL COMICS WEEK

SAM, DID YOU PROMISE TO PUT UP ANY CARTOON CHARACTERS WHO SHOWED UP FOR THE CONVENTION?
YEAH. IF ANYONE COMES, GET OUT THE COT.
dumas 4-30

I DON'T RECOGNIZE ANY OF YOU. ARE YOU ALL CURRENTLY EMPLOYED COMIC CHARACTERS?
COMIC CHARACTERS CONVENTION
IT'S OKAY, MISS. THEY'RE WITH ME
REGISTER HERE

WHO ARE YOU?
COMIC CHARACTERS CONVENTION
dumas
5-2
REGISTER HERE